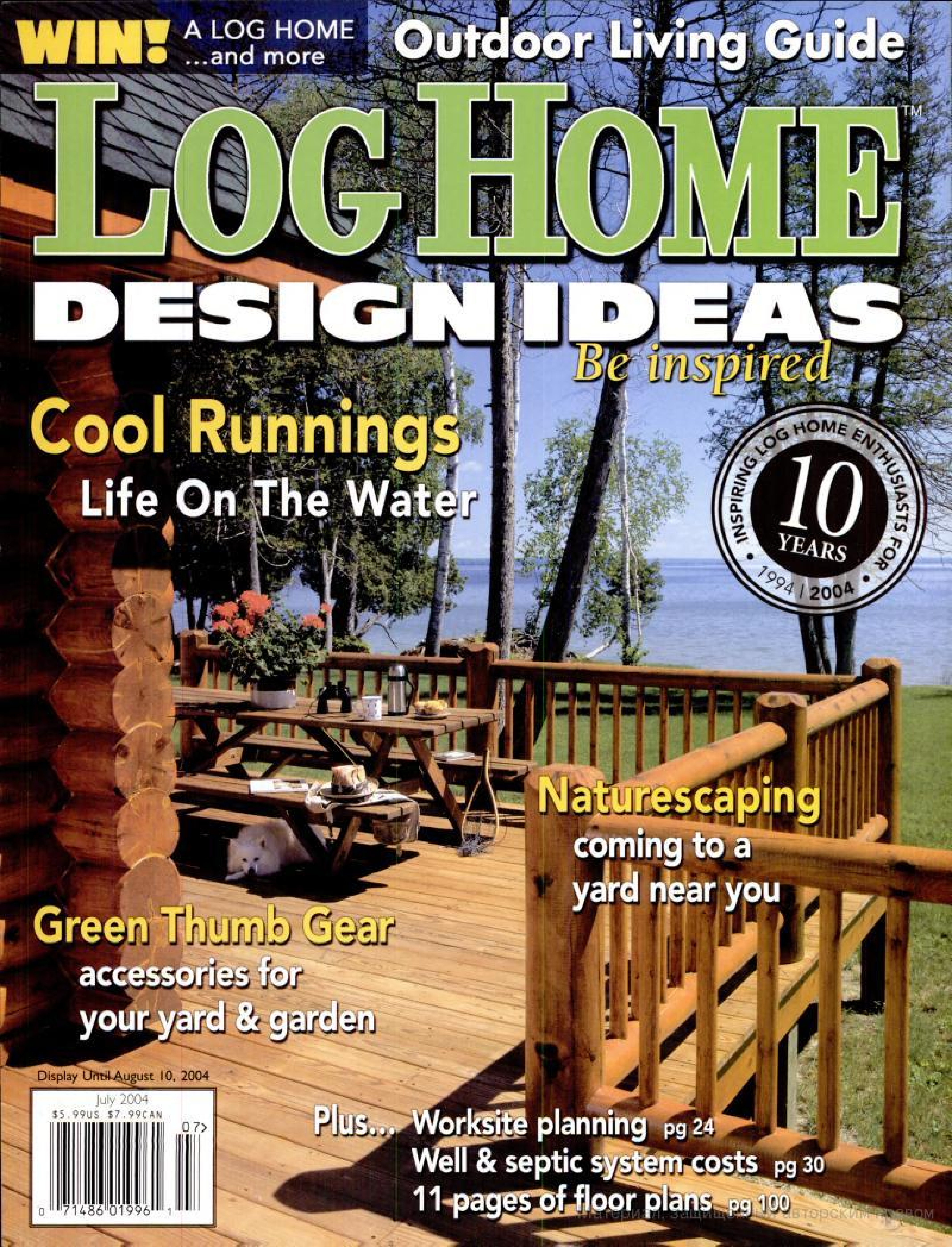

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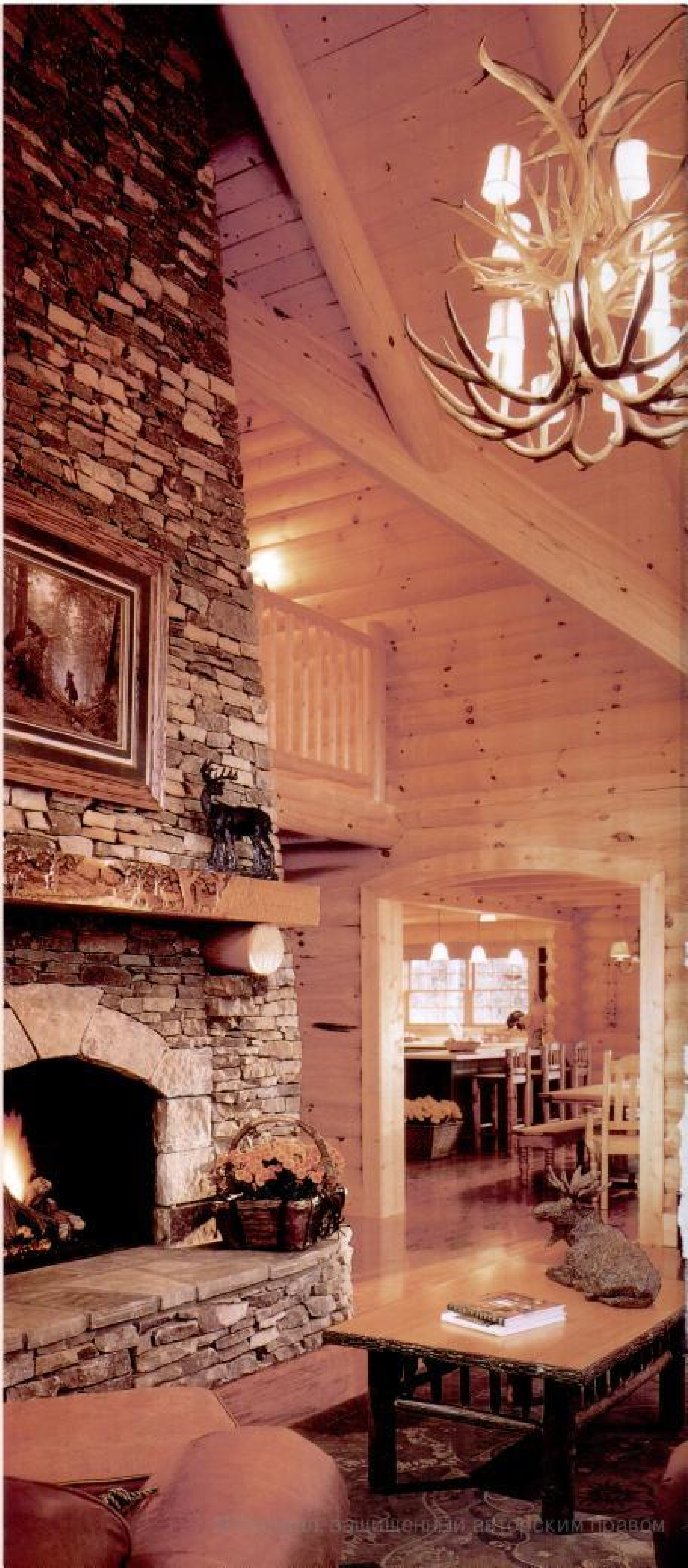

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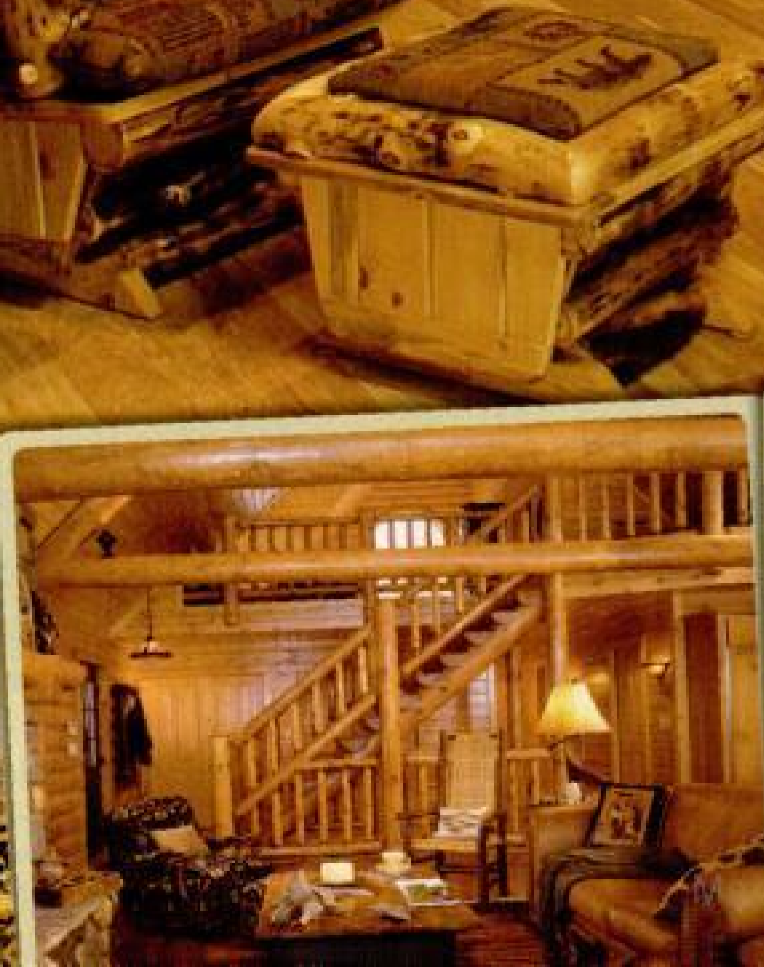

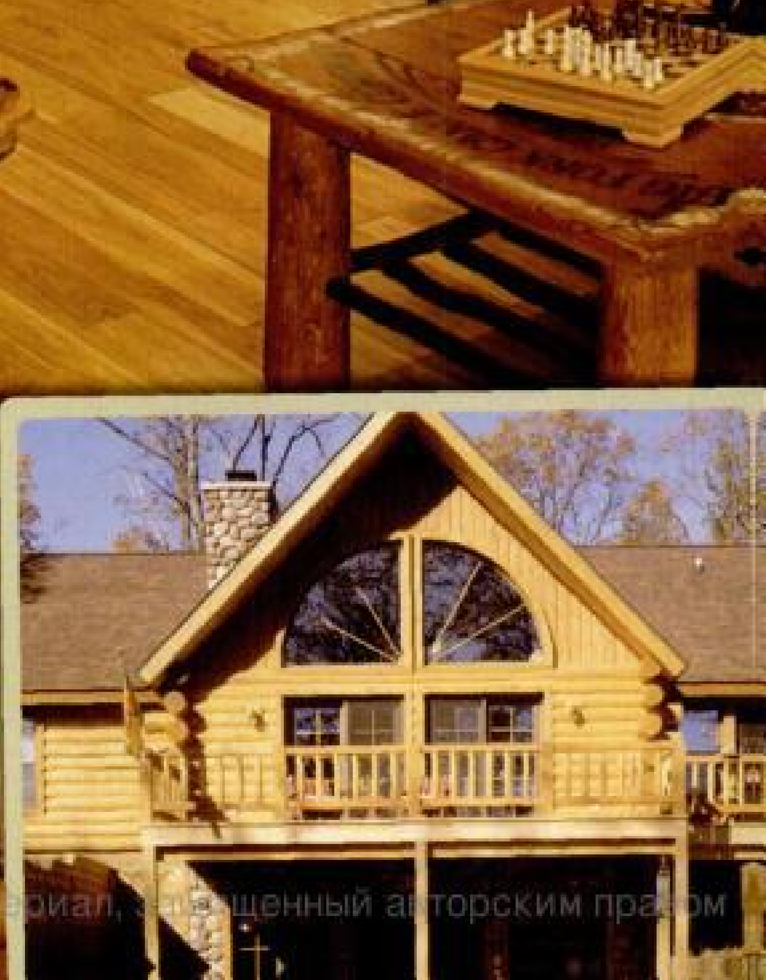

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Circle Reader Response #7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

36

Simple Scapes: The Art Of Naturescaping

Today's newest landscaping trend isn't landscaping at all. Instead, it's an all-natural, environmentally-friendly approach to gently shaping Mother Nature's own best efforts.

44

Cool Runnings: Life On The Water

The lure of waterside living is inescapable. Just make sure you know the pros and cons of building and living on the water before you buy waterfront property.

50

Finding Your Piece Of The Rock

What to look for while shopping for property — and what you should know before you sign on the dotted line.

54

Divine Restoration

A North Carolina couple converts family farmland into a lush resort — complete with historic log cabins.

Photo By Roger Wade

Photo Courtesy Boyd Mountain Log Cabins/By Roger Wade

COVER QUICK GUIDE

WIN! A log home . . . and more — page 14

Cool Runnings: Life On The Water — page 44

Naturescaping Coming To A Yard Near You — page 36

Green Thumb Gear: Accessories For Your Yard & Garden — page 81

Worksite Planning — page 24

Well & Septic System Costs — page 30

11 Pages Of Floor Plans — page 100

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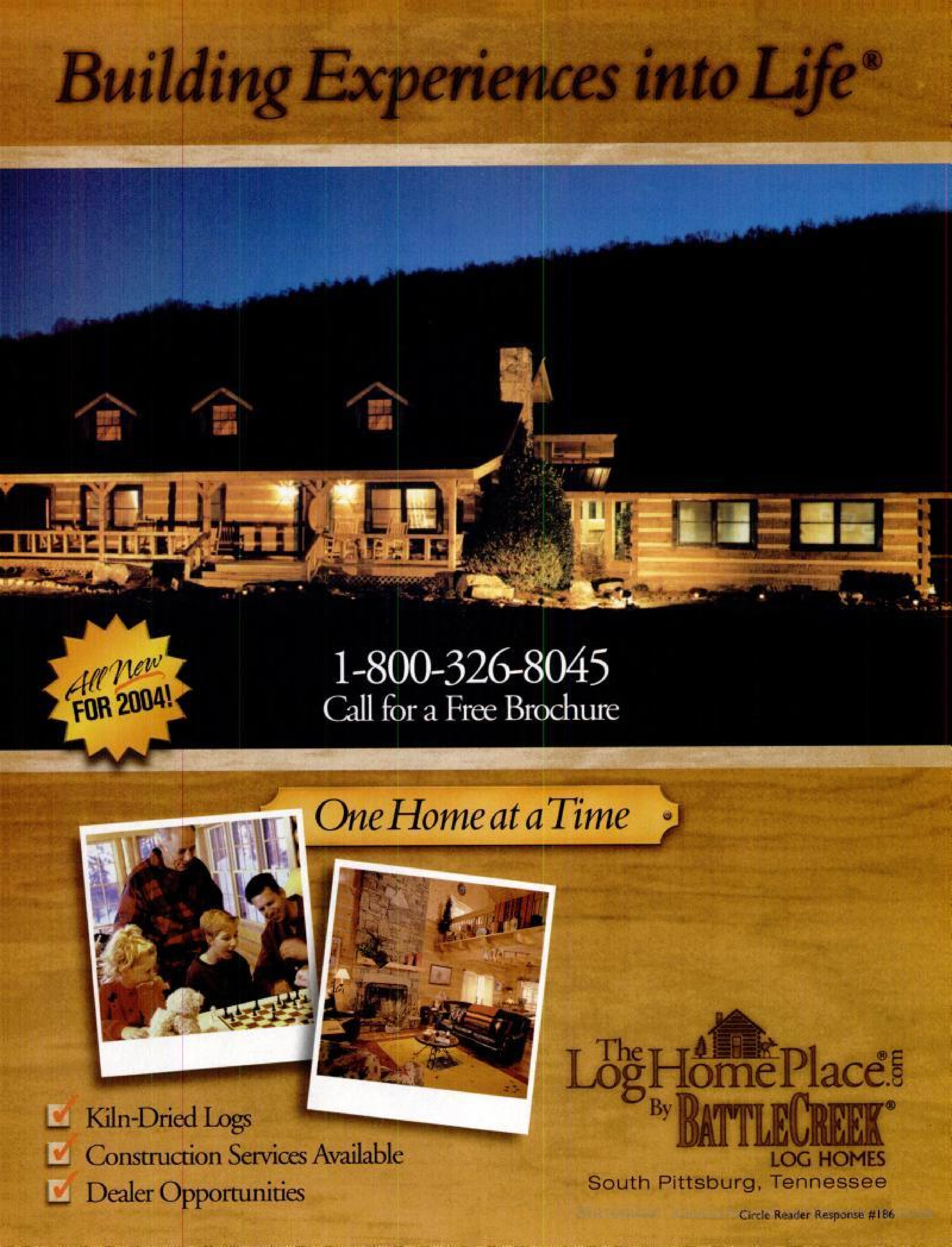
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

62
Little Jewel Box
A private crystal clear Montana Lake is the perfect setting for a cozy, guest-friendly log cabin.

70
A Family Affair
Taking advantage of family resources, a Georgia couple builds a lakeside vacation home inviting to both friends and relatives.

92
Happenings
Find an educational or informational event near you with our calendar of events listings for July, August and September.

81
Art Of The Home
Garden furniture takes center stage in our popular section devoted to furnishings and accessories for the log home.

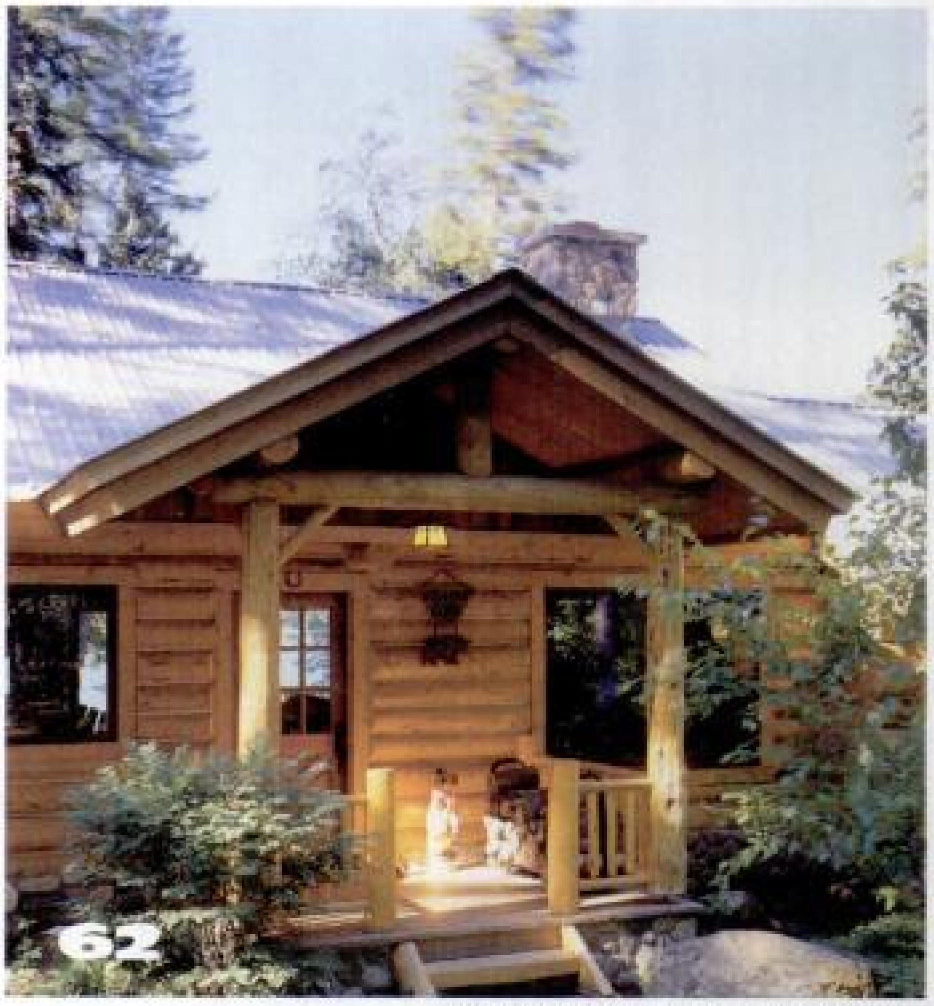

Photo Courtesy Mountain View Log Homes/By Roger Wade

ON THE COVER

Even a dog can appreciate a warm summer day and lake views from the deck. For tips on buying your own waterfront property, see "Cool Runnings: Life On The Water" on page 44.

Photo Courtesy Hiawatha Log Homes/By Brad Simmons/Produced By Brenda Kelley

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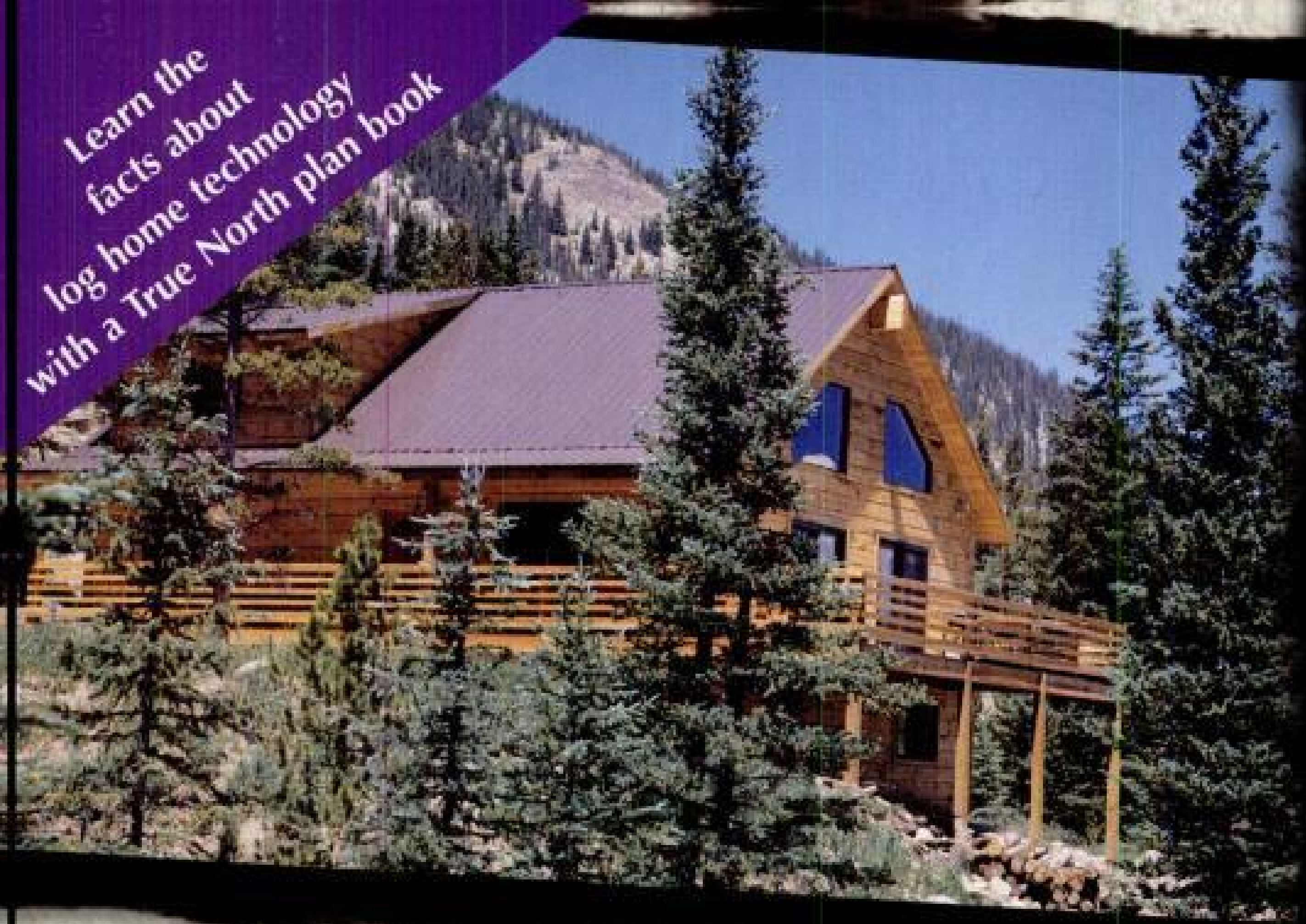

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IN EVERY ISSUE

10
Editor's Log
Thoughts from the editor

18
Seen & Heard
Our favorite lawn and garden books

20
Q&A
Meet Real Estate Broker David Gilhart

24
Builders Corner
Worksite Planning

30
Financing
Pricing Wells & Septic Systems

82
On Tap
Garden Accents

100
Floor Plans
Log home companies feature their most popular plans

112
Advertiser Index
Looking for a particular company? Use this list!

114
Directory of Builders, Dealers, Services & Suppliers
State-by-state and category listing

141
Logging On • Toll-Free
Contact our advertisers via their toll-free numbers or on the World Wide Web

144
Home Fires
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Arnold Ziffel, where are you?

"Land spreading out
so far and wide,
keep Manhattan —
just give me that countryside!"
— *"Green Acres" theme song*

Oliver Wendell Douglas was on to something when he gave up life in the city for life in Hooterville. If you ask me, Times Square has nothin' on fresh air. I'll take chores over stores any day.

I happened to catch an episode of "Green Acres" on TV Land the other night and laughed so hard I cried. No, it wasn't the first time I had seen the classic TV show. This time it was funny because the show's characters and story lines resonated with me.

I clearly saw caricatures of local personalities in Mr. Haney, Hank Kimball, Eb Dawson and the rest of the Hooterville gang. But what really struck me was Oliver Wendell's drive to make a go on the farm. He wanted out of the privileged city life he had left behind. He relished every chore, met every obstacle Green Acres farm threw at him with zest. All the challenges were still better, he reasoned, than life back in the city.

I can identify with that feeling. Lately, it seems all I can think about is moving to the country. Where this preoccupation came from, I'm not sure. I was born and raised in the city and it was an enjoyable experience. My hometown had great parks, a swimming hole where I practically lived during summer break, and best of all it was home to the county fair.

So you'd think living in a small town like I do today would be the perfect fit. But somehow, I've got the itch. I want to move to the country.

Watching 30 minutes of Oliver Wendell's adventures in rural living struck a chord with me. I wanted to know more about "Green Acres" so I powered up my computer and surfed the Web. On one fan's site, I found a list that had me howling; it said that Oliver (played by Eddie Albert) and Lisa (played by Zsa Zsa Gabor) had nine different New York addresses before moving to Hooterville. Oliver hated them all for different reasons:

East 62nd: Too noisy
East 54th: Too crowded
East 37th: No sunshine
5th Avenue: No privacy
East 62nd: No fresh air
Sutton Place: Too expensive
Madison Avenue: Too snooty
Central Park: Too far downtown
Park Avenue: Too far uptown

I can't complain about my current locale that much, but I have the same desire for quiet solitude, sunshine-filled open spaces and fresh air. If you're yearning for your own perfect piece of land, be sure to read "Finding Your Piece Of The Rock" on page 50. If you know waterfront property is what you're looking for, check out the first in a series of real estate stories we'll be running over the course of the next year (page 44). And for those of you already living in your log home, you can get ideas for shaping your property in a nature-friendly way in our feature on naturescaping (page 36).

Now, back to my copy of The Farm Gazette. Maybe I'll find a listing for my own Green Acres in the classifieds.

Teresa

Teresa Hilgenberg, Editor
thilgenberg@aimmedia.com

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CONGRATS!

As part of our 10th Anniversary celebration, we are giving away 10 one-year subscriptions to *LHDI* each month. Lucky winners in our fourth drawing are:

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To learn how you can win a subscription of your own or become eligible to win a log home from **Appalachian Log Homes** or a log billiard table from **Roaring Fork Custom Billiards & Furniture**, see the ad on pages 14 and 15 of this issue or visit our website, www.lhdi.com.

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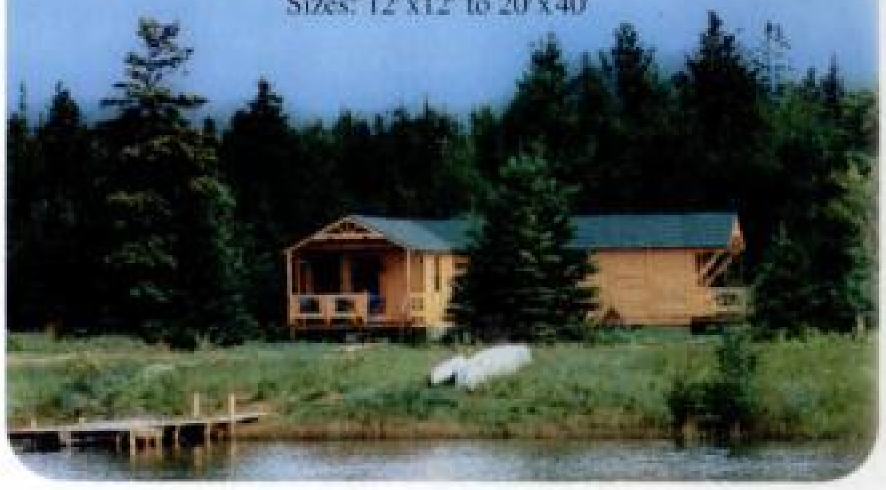

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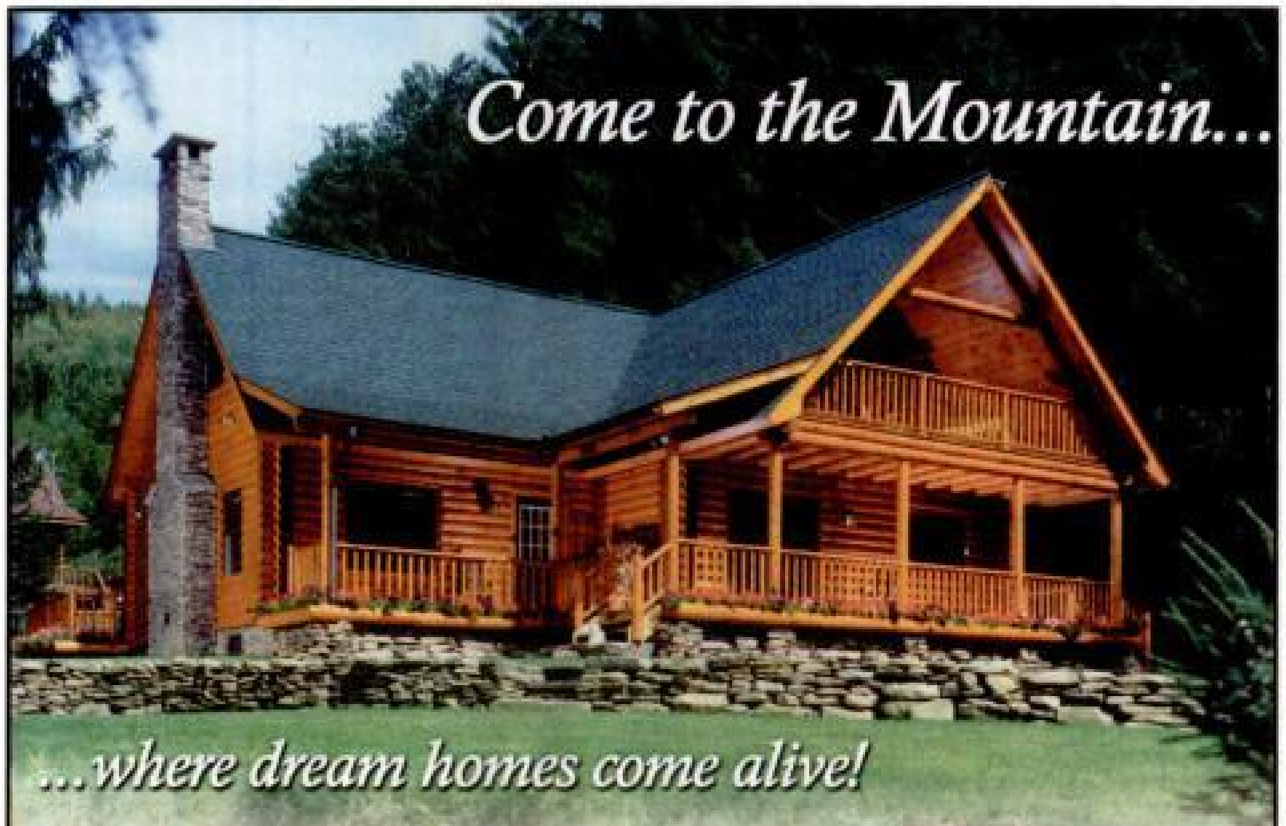

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LOOKING To Attend An Event?

The "Happenings" section in each issue of *Log Home Design Ideas* will keep you informed of future open house, log raising, seminar and workshop dates. Look for it on pages 92-98 of this issue.

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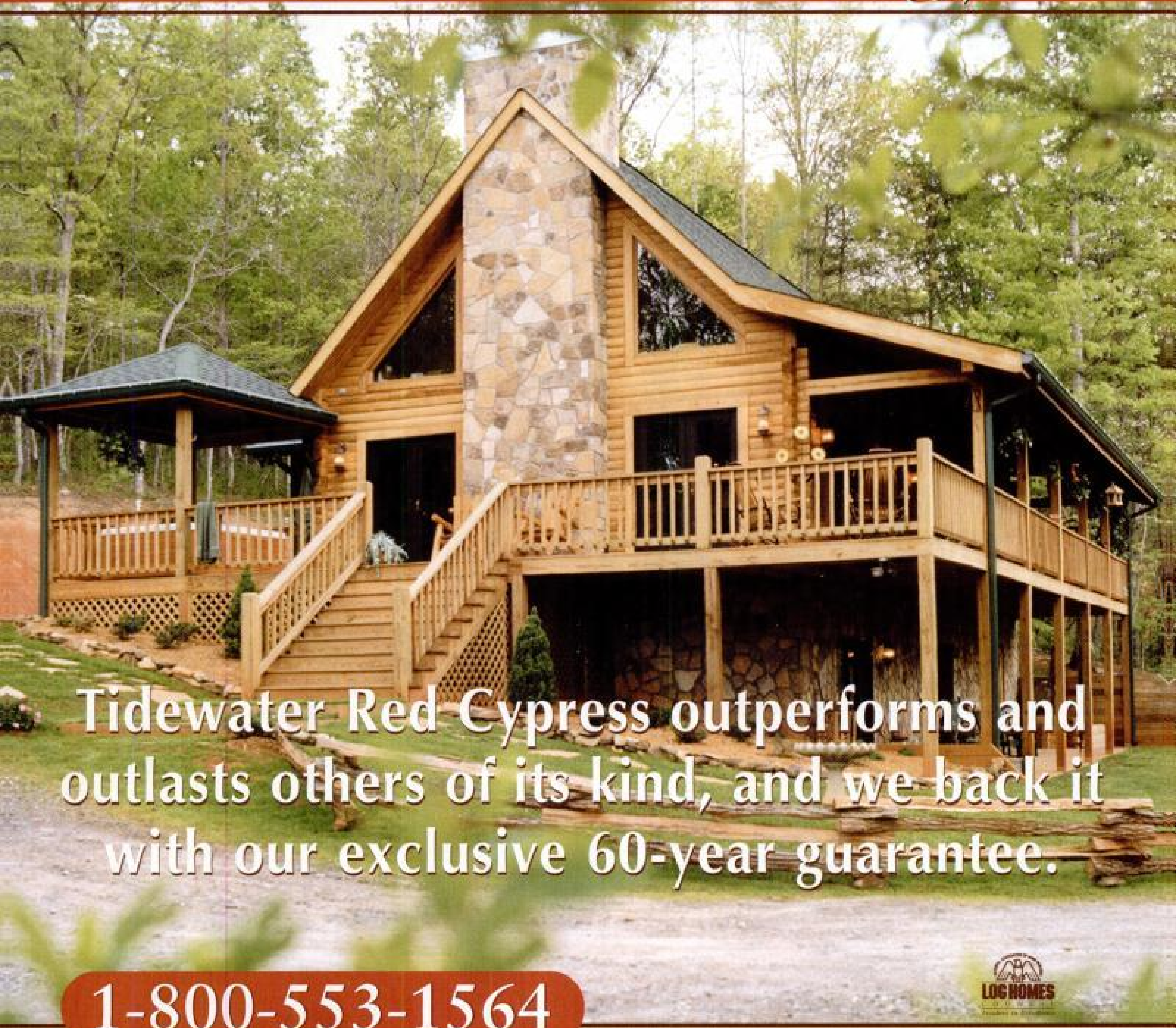

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Since 1994, we have been educating and inspiring log home enthusiasts across North America. We've changed a lot over the years, growing from a quarterly to bimonthly to 10 issues a year. We've watched the industry grow and have shared the stories of more than 200 homeowners already living their dream. But one thing hasn't changed, and that's our commitment to you. To say thanks, we're celebrating our 10th year in a big way with an Anniversary Giveaway. One lucky winner will be one step closer to their log home dream when they win a log package from Appalachian Log Homes. Another lucky winner will take home a handcrafted log billiard table from Roaring Fork Custom Billiards & Furniture. And throughout the year, we will be awarding 100 subscriptions and Step-By-Step CD-ROMs to contest entrants — that's 10 each month in our first 10 issues of the year.

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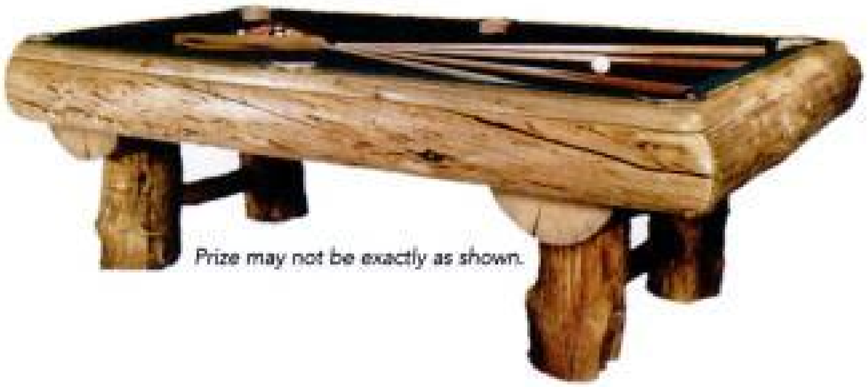
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How to Enter

Write the answer to the question "What American president lived in a log cabin and is pictured on the penny?" on a postcard, along with your name, address, city/state/zip code, home and daytime phone numbers, and mail it to Log Home Design Ideas, 10th Anniversary Giveaway, 1620 S. Lawe St., Ste. 2, Appleton, WI 54915. You can also enter by answering the question and filling out the electronic form on our website, www.lhdi.com. *See page 143 for complete contest rules.*

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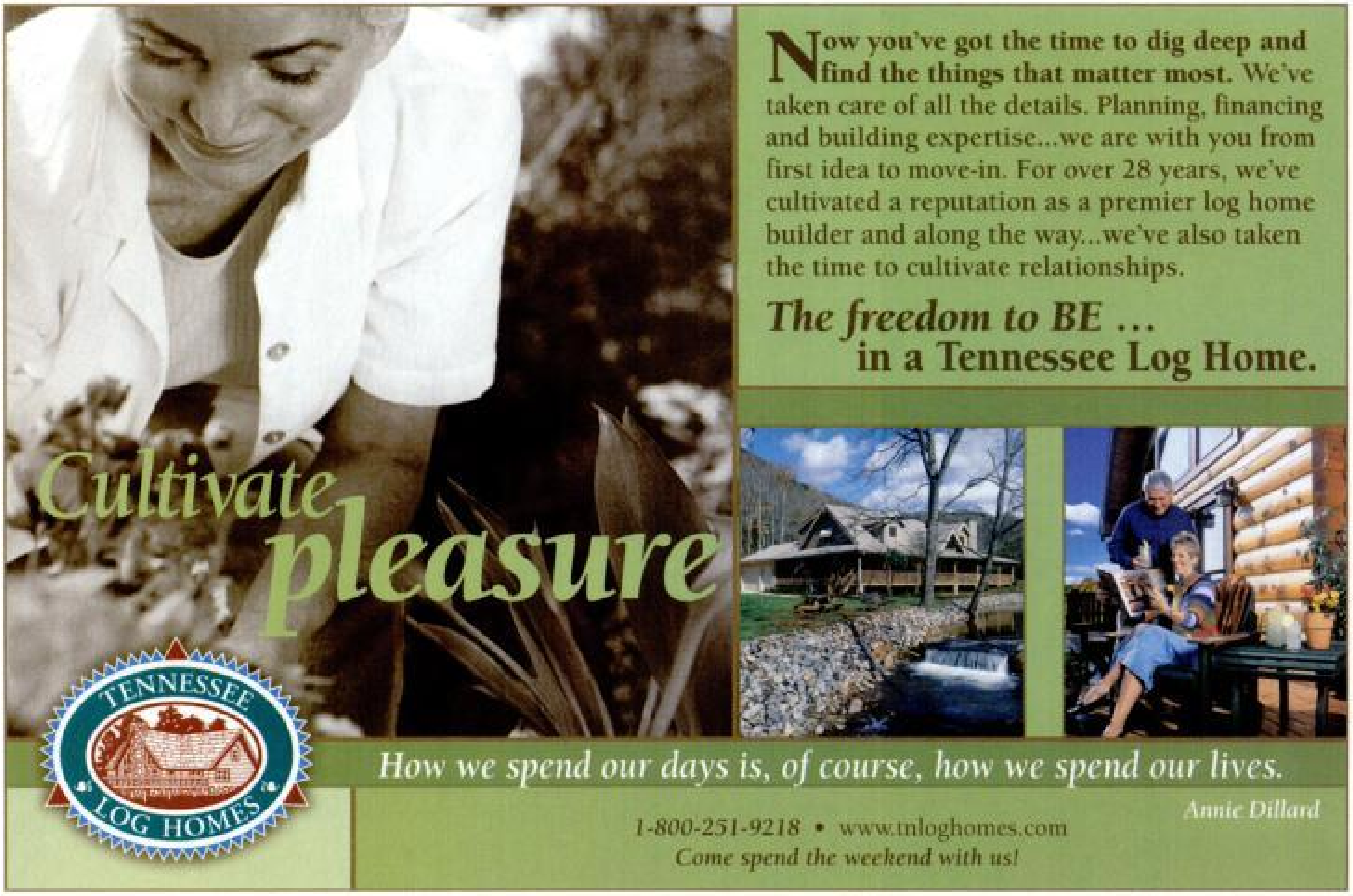

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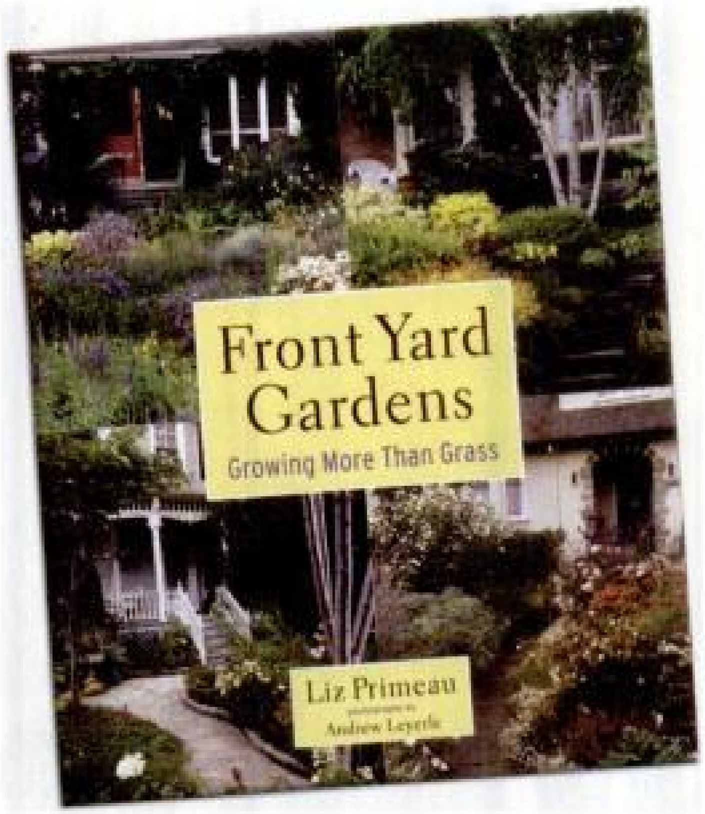

Front Yard Gardens
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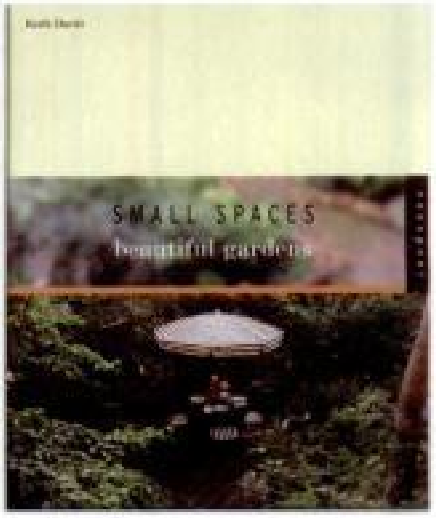

Small Spaces, Beautiful Gardens
Keith Davitt • 144 pages
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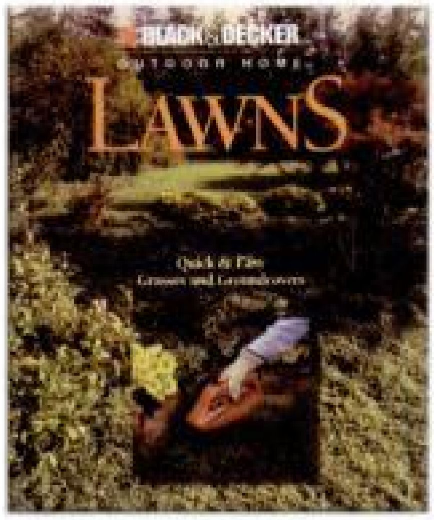
Davitt offers effective space-enhancing advice and tips for creating integrated, unified garden environments. Step-by-step instructions for projects of varying degrees of difficulty are illustrated with color photography and drawings.

To contact Rockport Publishers, call 978-282-9590 or visit www.rockpub.com.

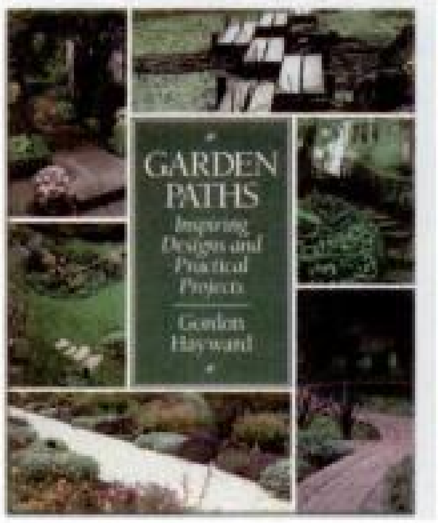


Lawns
Carol A. Crotta • 104 pages
Creative Publishing International

Running barefoot on a luxurious blanket of grass is one of the pleasures of summer. Growing and maintaining a healthy lawn of your own is easy with Black & Decker's *Lawns*, which reveals the secrets of giving your home a plush yard.

The book covers everything from planting new lawns to watering and weeding to pest control to fertilizing grass. Included is a checklist of everything you need to do to get the results you want.

To contact Creative Publishing International, call 800-328-0590 or visit www.creativepub.com.



Garden Paths
Gordon Hayward • 246 pages
Firefly Books

It's one thing to appreciate a beautiful garden from afar. It's quite another to actually walk amongst blooming flowers and leafy, verdant plants.

A pathway can help you get more enjoyment from your garden. *Garden Paths* gives practical do-it-yourself advice for laying walkways. General garden design principals and methods are presented, along with information on path materials like cut stone, brick, concrete and stepping stones.

To contact Firefly Books, call 800-387-5085 or visit www.fireflybooks.com.

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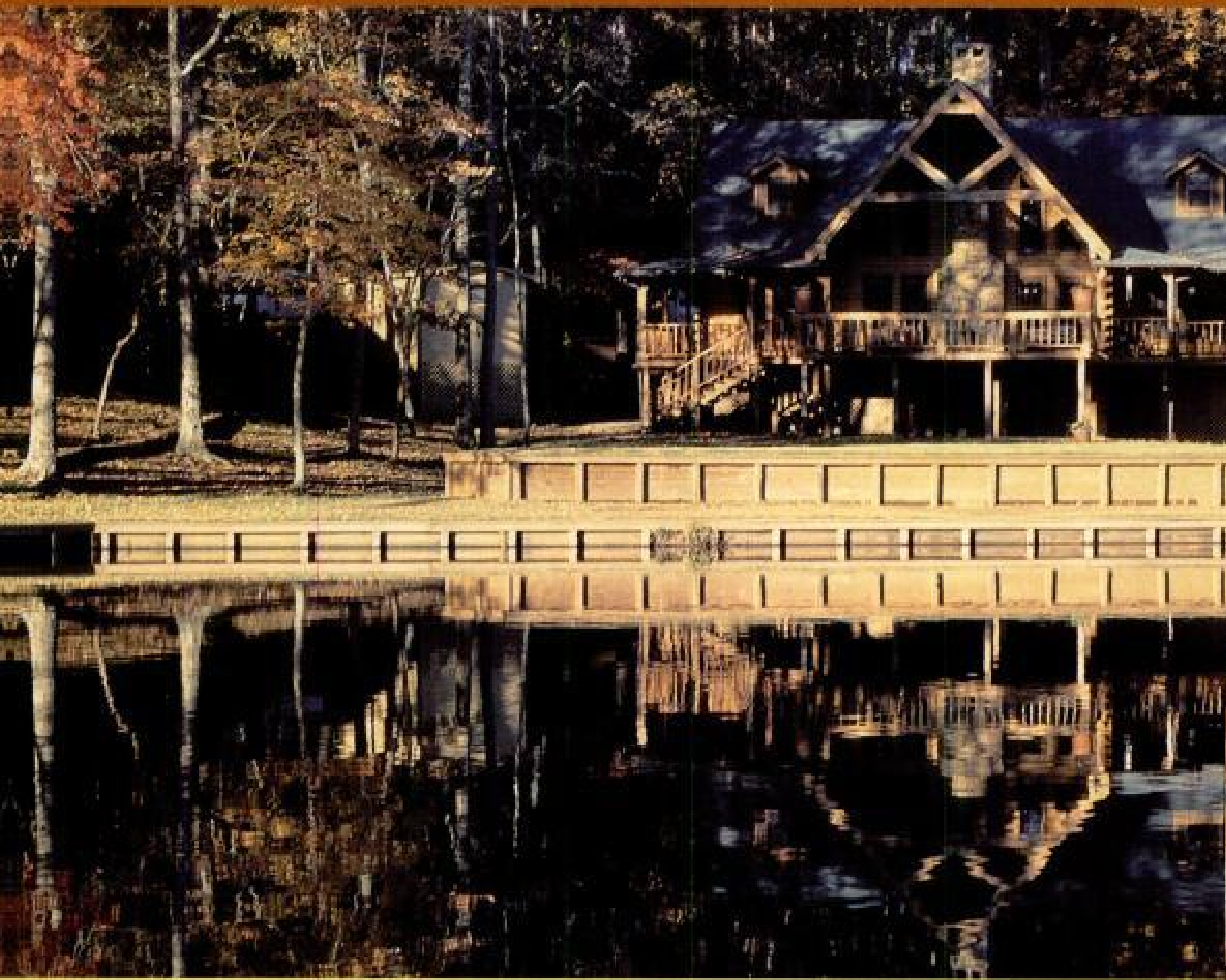

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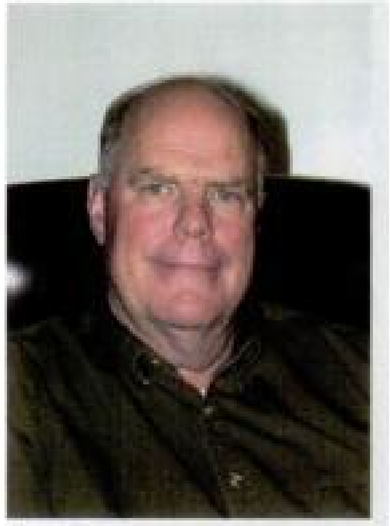
Circle Reader Response #9

LHDH07

BY PETER LINDBLAD

An In-Depth Look At Real Estate

Meet Real Estate Broker David Gilhart



David Gilhart witnessed one of the biggest real estate booms in U.S. history. It was enough to convince him that real estate was the business to be in.

Gilhart has attended real estate schools in Florida, South Carolina and North Carolina. He holds active broker's licenses in North Carolina and Florida and takes continuing education courses in both states.

These days, his life and career revolve around Gateway Mountain, a 2,700-acre community set in an 80-year-old hardwood forest he calls home. Gilhart and his partners develop, market and sell property in the Gateway Mountain gated community, where people primarily build a second residence and/or future retirement home.

A long-time real estate broker, Gilhart belongs to a number of associations, including local and national boards of Realtors, all chambers of commerce within 25 miles of Gateway Mountain, the Better Business Bureau and the Community Associations Institute.

LHDI: Take us through the process of buying land.

Gilhart: From start to end, here are the steps you take:

- Find the area and climate you are most comfortable with. Other considerations include access to health care, entertainment and recreation options, the proximity to airports, and the like.
- Ask yourself these questions: Do I want to live in a gated community or something that's free-standing? Do I want something that's restricted or unrestricted? Would I rather live in a resort-type community or something with more privacy? Do I want a structured setting or a place where I can do what I want when the spirit moves me?
- Find land that fits your lifestyle and is a short distance from things important to you.
- Find out what activities take place within 5 miles of your land. Is there a landfill close by? Is there a race track in the vicinity, or timber operations, or condominiums?
- Budget for the whole process. Ask yourself how much you plan to spend on land and building the home. Don't forget additional expenses such as site clearing, driveway installation and septic and well systems. There always seem to be some changes during the building process. Add an extra 10% as a buffer to the budget. The whole process rarely comes in at or under budget.
- Think about the resale value. Your kids will want to make a buck or two.
- Purchase land that all members of your household will be happy with, not just one of you.

LHDI: How do you research the history of a piece of property.

Gilhart: First, hire an attorney or research the property yourself at the local courthouse. Check to see if the property has any liens and encumbrances — right-of-ways through it, mineral rights that have been sold, restrictions on the property use, etc.

You want a free and clear title and you want to be able to use the land for the purpose you have in mind. Most people don't really have the expertise to go to the courthouse and dig through this information, so it may be better to let your closing attorney do a title search and title opinion. You should consider protecting yourself with title insurance no matter how good your attorney might be.

Items you need to review include:

Deed restrictions. These are things you will not be able to do with your property. For example, they may prevent you from running any commercial business out of your house, raising livestock or keeping mobile homes on the property.

Title search. A must for ensuring that a lien has not been placed on the property or that there are any other problems with the title.

Title insurance. This will hopefully cover you if your attorney has missed something.

Zoning. What is going to be going on around you? What is the neighboring land zoned for? Can your neighbor raise pigs?

Covenants. These are special restrictions imposed within a development or community. They might address issues like fences, trash piles, broken-down vehicles, flags and yard ornaments,

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building styles and materials. Many developments have property owner's associations and architectural review committees that must approve building plans before you can begin building.

LHDI: What are some important factors in choosing a building site for a log home?

Gilhart: A lot of it has to do with personal taste and preference. An active, outdoors-oriented person may want plenty of space and flat area to work with, perhaps a lot with minimal slope and room for a garden or outbuilding.

Mountain property is usually anything but flat. Long range views are normally found on the higher elevation lots, with water and flatter parcels found in the lower elevations on the mountain. If you enjoy a deck as much as I do, view is everything! Keep in mind though, the higher elevations may provide better views but you will have a steeper drive to the homesite, increased exposure to wind and other elements and a steeper sloping lot.

Some clients prefer a southern view and exposure although views to the south often tend to be hazier than views to the north. Some are content with short-range views of the surrounding hills and mountains while others prefer the long-range views of the larger surrounding mountain ranges. The building process is much easier when you have plenty of space to work with, especially when taking into consideration privacy and the placement of the septic tank, drainfields and well.

If you choose to build on property with a view, it is important that you own the trees that may obstruct your views. You may have a lot with beautiful views but if your neighboring lots have trees that will grow and obstruct your views, cutting, trimming and maintaining those views will not be an option.

If you're buying a parcel for its views, be sure you control them or you may just lose them. Adjacent property owners may not trim trees and other foliage or may develop the area with buildings that could block your views. Look to covenants that govern things like how many trees can be cleared and the type of development allowed on a parcel to help protect the value of your property. *Photo Couresy Gateway Mountain*

Resale value is another factor to consider. Lots with long-range views cost more from the start, but they usually have much higher resale values than wooded mountain lots without views.

Many of our clients are purchasing land for a vacation home or future retirement. They are looking for low house and lot maintenance — no more grass cutting! They prefer to enjoy their time on the mountain and let the forest take care of itself.

LHDI: What factors affect land prices? How do you find the best deals on land?

Gilhart: Location, location, location! In our area, views make the cash register really jingle. On our mountain lot prices average between $45,000 and $250,000.

A great lot should have a quality building site, some useable room and pretty trees. It would be great if it was three acres or more to provide some privacy. This lot could very well be $50,000, but the more view it has the more the price goes up.

You find the best deals by taking your time and doing your homework. Research the community and area. Talk with other property owners in the community or development. If need be, hire a buyer's agent to help with the search and gathering information.

LHDI: Any advice on what characteristics to avoid in a piece of property?

Gilhart: I would not buy a piece of property in the mountains without the seller furnishing me with a valid septic permit.

Avoid areas that do not have zoning or land use control plans. I'd want to protect my property values and I'd like

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to know what is going to be happening around me.

Find out if the community has protective covenants and restrictions. While you may not want to live in a community with rigid sets of rules, you don't want to live next to a neighbor with junk cars or piles of trash. If this is a second home or you travel a lot, the protection of a gated community or full-time neighbors might be important.

Ask about the property owner's association and find out if it is well organized and active. See if the community has plans for future development of the area. And read up on the history of the community and find out what the resale values are.

LHDI: How do you help prospective homeowners find property?

Gilhart: When meeting prospective clients, you have to be a good listener and find out what their dreams and expectations are. What would that perfect piece of property look like to them? What style of home do they plan to build and how big will it be? What is their budget for the land and house? Because we are somewhat remote, I address driving distances to work, schools, hospitals, shopping, etc.

SOURCES:

Gateway Mountain
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BY GUY HUENECKE

Worksite Planning

The secret to a successful build begins with the dirt work

So you've found the perfect spot to build your log home. You've done your homework and purchased property, money and permits are in place and you're ready to go! Now it's time for the "dirt work," or site preparation.

Dig a hole, pour some concrete, erect the foundation walls and you're ready for your logs right? At times it can almost be that simple, but even a simple lot requires careful site planning to minimize cost and maximize results.

There are several steps you or your general contractor need to work out before logs can be delivered to your site. Worksite planning may not be glamorous, but it's a necessary part of the building process. Photo By Paul Hafermann Photography

IDENTIFY YOUR BOUNDARIES

Start by identifying your property boundaries, typically marked at the corners by iron pins. Be sure to find out if there are any building setbacks on the lot. The plat, deed restrictions or local building ordinance may, for example, stipulate that no part of the building be closer than 15 feet to the side property line and 25 feet from the front property line. That restriction may even apply to roof overhangs.

Restrictions aren't an issue in wide open spaces, but many log homes are built in developments with tight boundaries. It is much easier to move stakes in the ground than concrete after the fact.

SITING AFFECTS COSTS

Naturally you want to maximize the view from your log home, but you should also site your house with construction costs in mind. Mountain construction, for example, requires extra thought. Siting the house on a steep slope may give you the best view, but the height of the foundation on the downhill side may give you a nose bleed — and put a big dent in your wallet. Moving the home back off the steep part of the hill may save you tens of thousands of dollars in foundation costs.

It is hard to tell true slope with the naked eye. A simple site glass or inexpensive laser level can show you how steep your slope really is. You only need 4 or 5 feet of elevation change front to back to have a walk-out basement. Anything over 8 feet will typically require additional foundation work.

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

The less you disturb your property's natural contours, the less cost you will incur and the more you will be able to maintain the site's natural beauty. In addition to aesthetics and cost, however, there are a number of important factors to consider. They include:

Rockwork. Dirt work may include breaking up and removing rock. Your contractor will undoubtedly have a rock clause stating that hammering or blasting hidden rock will cost extra. Sometimes you know it is there, other times you just have to take your chances. If sub-surface rock is a major concern, soil borings can tell you what is in the ground.

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∇ Circle Reader Response #224

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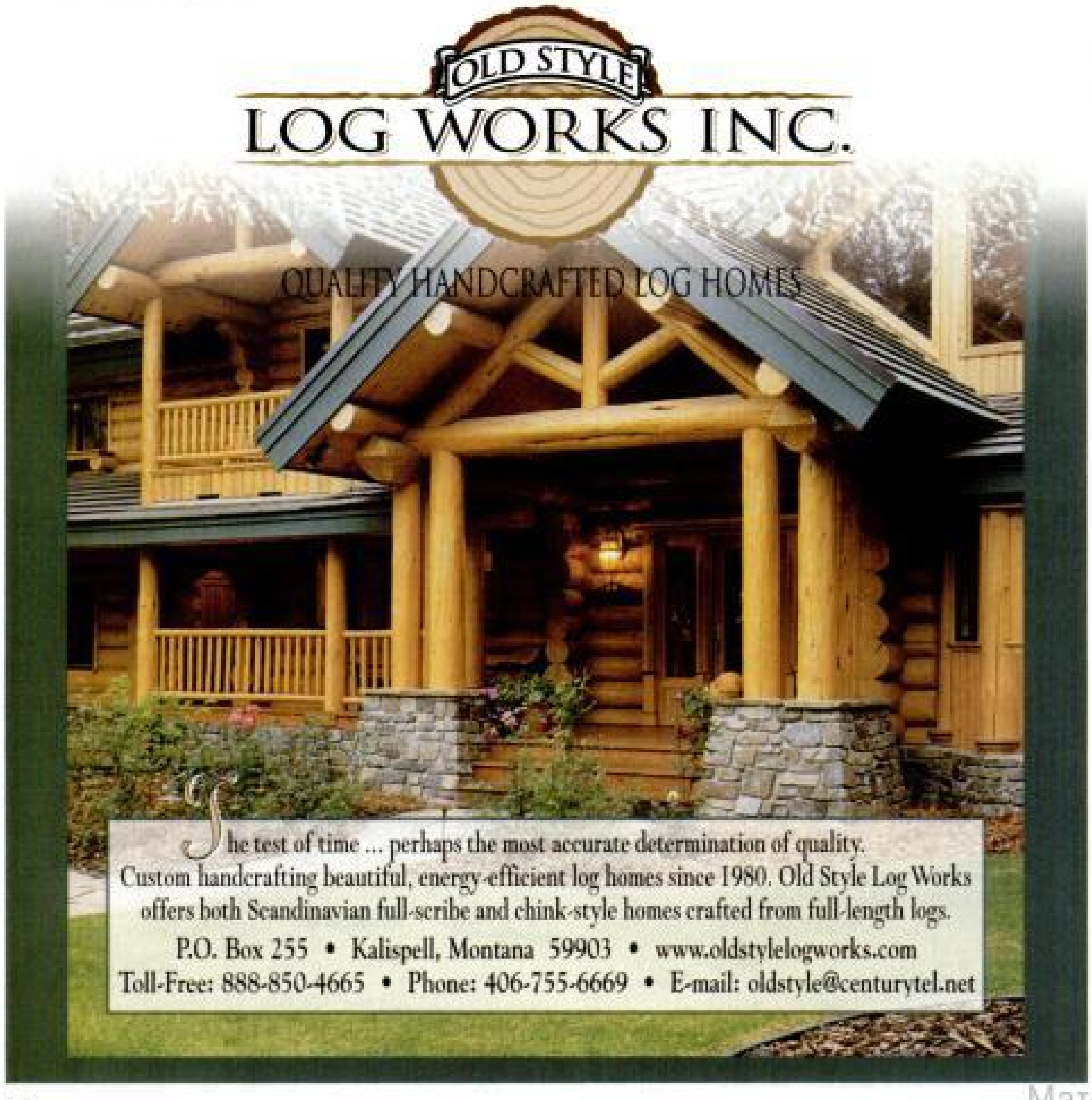

timber with minimal damage to the remaining trees. A good excavator will down trees without scarring adjacent trees. Again, talk to your contractor to get an understanding of the cost involved and the desired result.

PREPARE THE SITE FOR LOG DELIVERY

Once the trucks arrive, you will need space to unload the logs. All this space needs to be cleared, so if you have a tight lot on the side of a mountain or lake that restricts the movement of material, you may need to consider an offsite staging area.

Remember that your builder needs space to work on the house and a place to store the logs and other materials. Bundled logs take up a lot of room. If they are precut, you usually can't double stack the bundles.

Nor can you place them all on the subfloor. Not only is there not enough space, it isn't built to handle the weight of all your logs. The log builder may place a few logs on the subfloor, but he will need that space to move about as he stacks your logs.

If you are building on a hillside lot, it will cost you less in labor to carry the logs down the hill to the house than carrying them up the hill to the subfloor. So if at all possible store materials on the uphill side.

True, dirt work isn't exciting or pretty. You don't have the instant gratification of seeing log walls going up, but it is the start. Plan your site work well and the results will complement your new log home.

Guy Huenecke is a residential and commercial contractor and partner in The Construction Process Group, a log home construction support company. You can reach him at ghuenecke@constructionprocessgroup.com.

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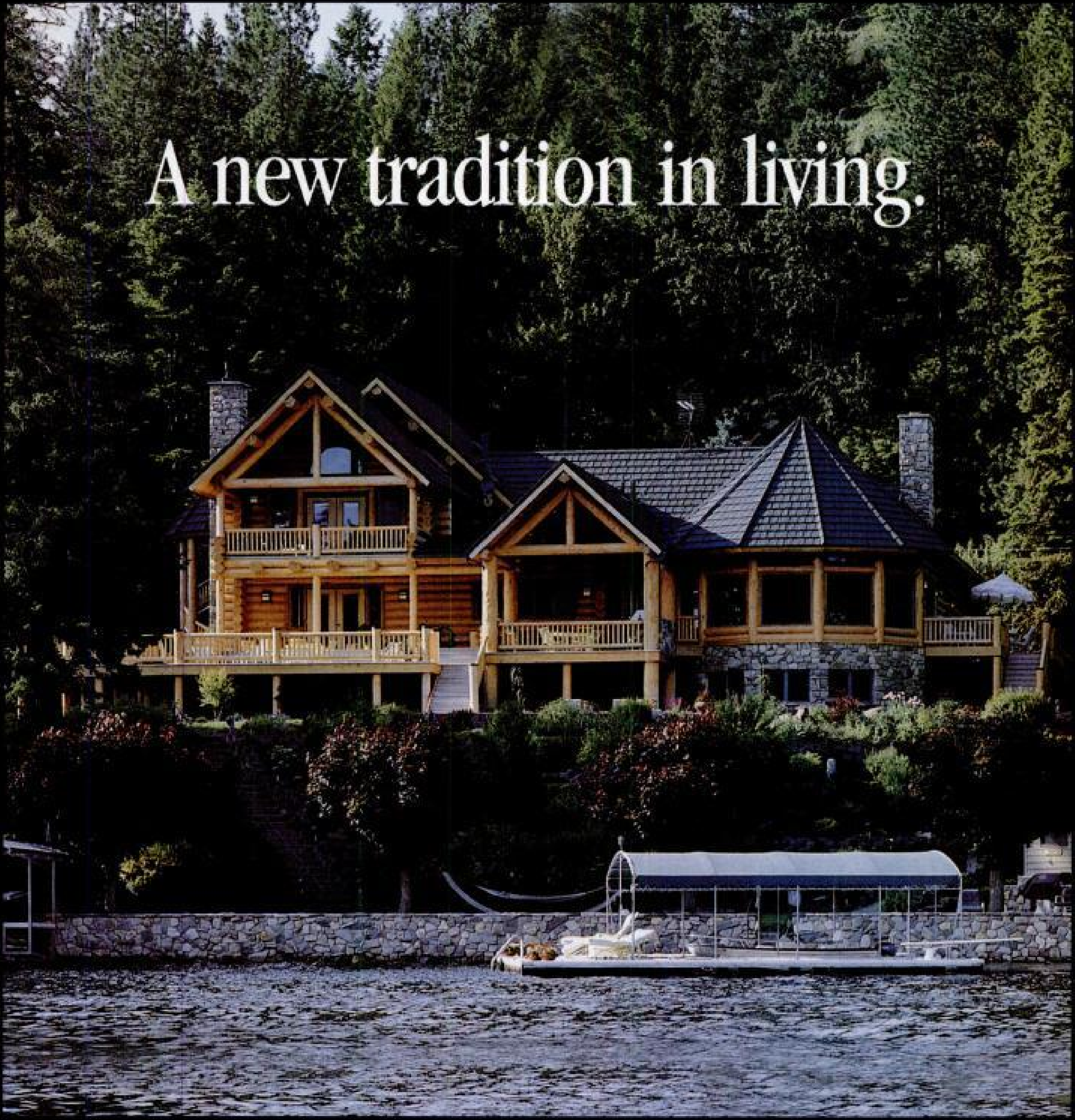

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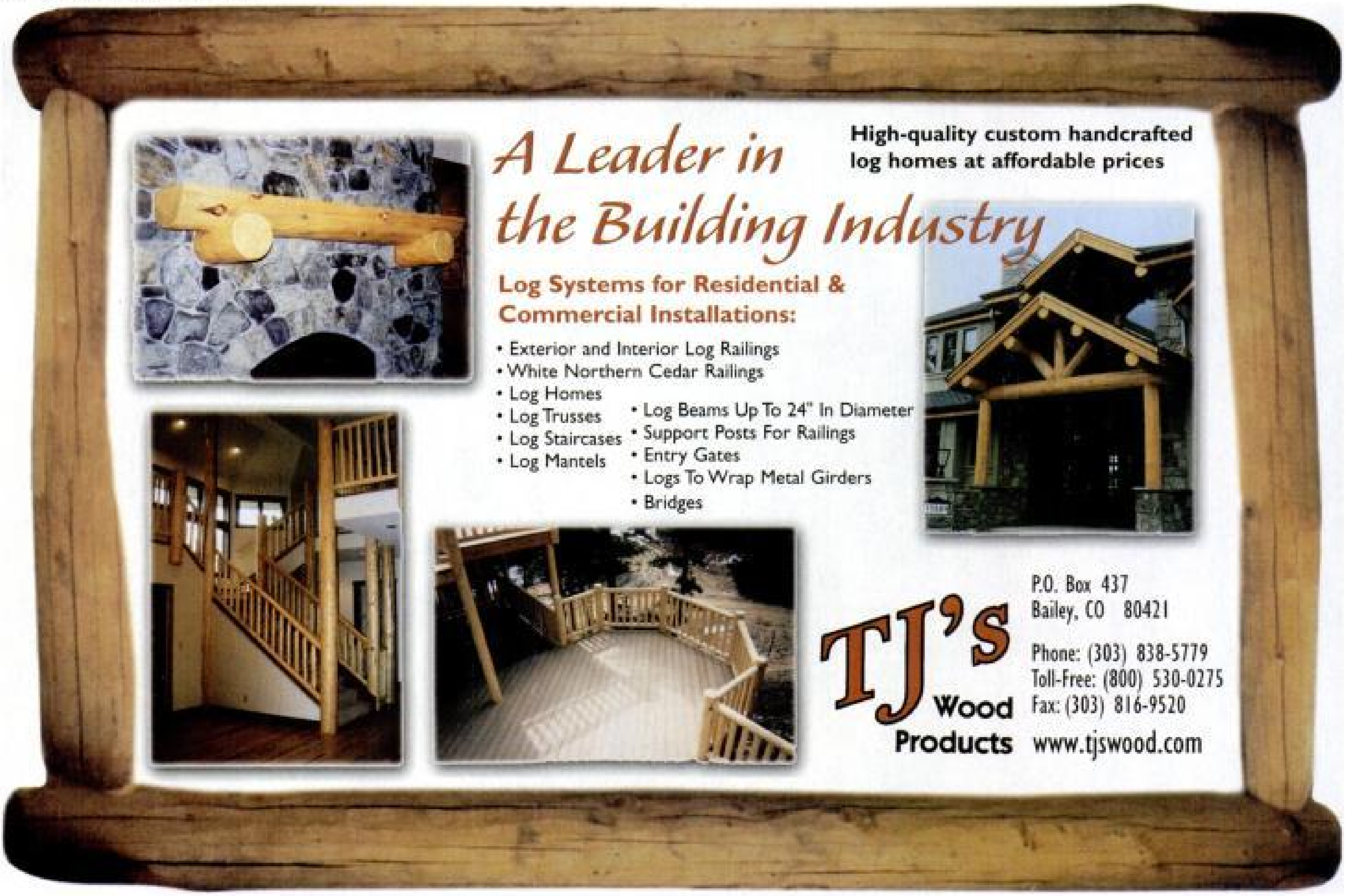

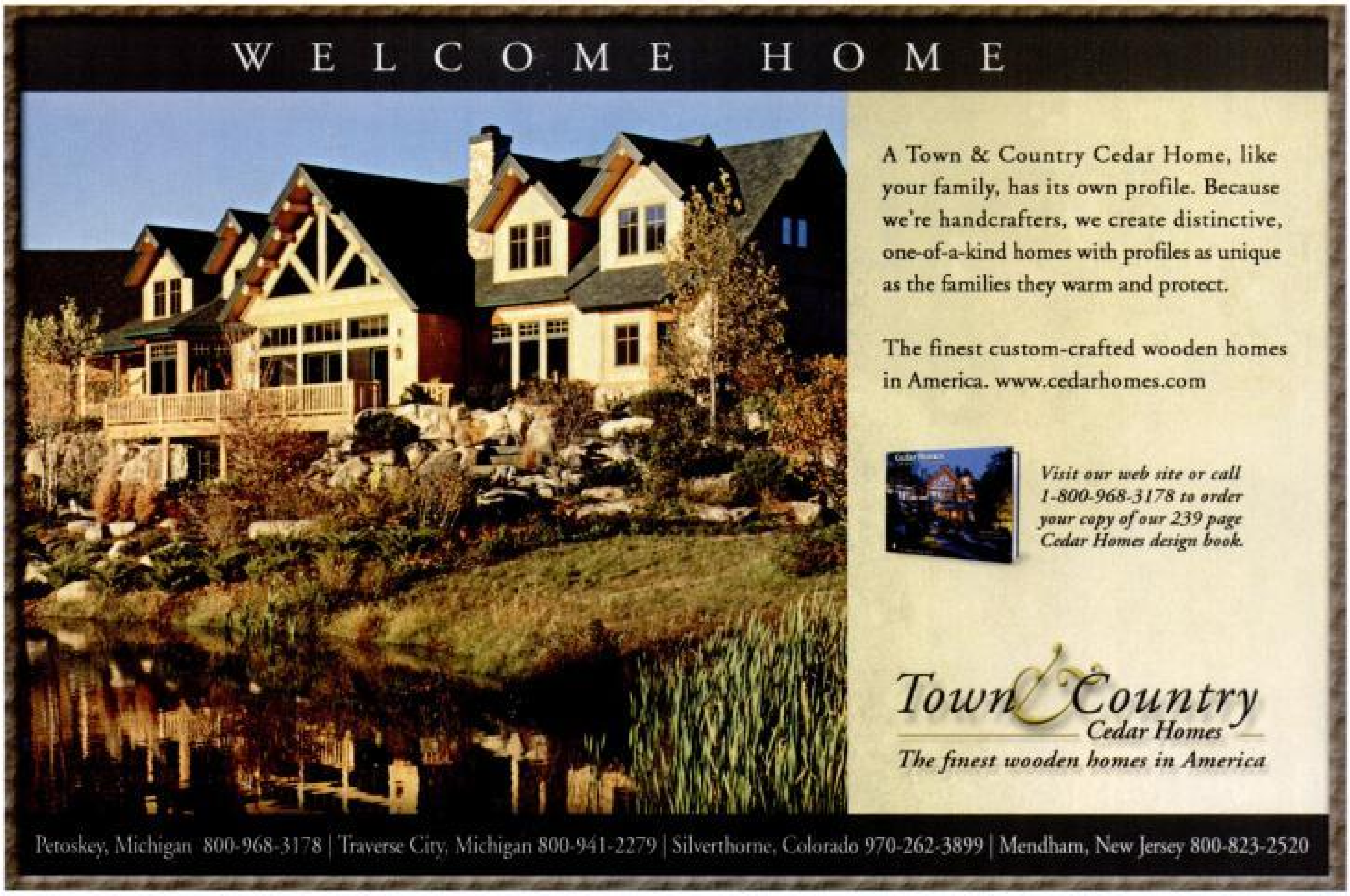

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BY BRYAN TRANDEM

Pricing Wells & Septic Systems

Need to dig a well or install a septic system? Both projects can be expensive if you don't do your homework.

Among several issues related to building a rural home, a prime consideration is the need for a groundwater well to supply fresh water and a septic system to handle household waste. Unlike urban building sites, undeveloped areas generally aren't connected to any kind of municipal water supply or sewer system, so you'll need to make other provisions — and an additional investment — for these crucial functions.

In most cases, this means drilling a well to pump in fresh water and laying a septic field to handle household sewage. These are issues you need to consider before purchasing any piece of land.

Building a log home in a remote area often means digging a well or installing your own septic system. The total cost varies depending on your property's characteristics and your household's demands on the system. *Photo Courtesy Rocky Mountain Log Homes*

WELL & SEPTIC SYSTEM COSTS

Costs for either system can vary widely. An average 100 foot deep well costs roughly $4,000, but on sites overlying granite bedrock, the costs can soar over $20,000, according to Vicki Benes, of Benes Well Drilling Inc. of rural Itasca County in northern Minnesota.

Such variation is common in every region of the country. The situation is similar for septic systems. Ken Olson, an expert on rural septic systems with the University of Minnesota Cooperative Extension service, says septic alone can cost from $3,000 to $13,000 for initial installation, but $20,000 installations are reported.

At a potential combined cost of $40,000, a well and septic system have an obvious impact on the financing of your home. So how do you know if your situation will require a $6,000 or a $40,000 outlay? To understand the issues, let's walk through the process.

EVALUATING YOUR SITE

Before purchasing any building site, call a local well-digger. An on-site inspection is important, but the contractor can give you plenty of information based simply on the legal land description. This information is part of the deed to any piece of land, and can be provided by the Realtor or broker offering the land for sale.

Many well-digging companies have computerized databases that indicate what the likely drilling scenarios are for any given site. Some firms, in fact, issue bids based on this information alone. In addition to geologic information, the database catalogs the water test results for nearby wells in the area, giving a

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coming
in September

Fall Fixup

Log Home Design Ideas tackles log home care inside and out with a guide to giving your logs their yearly checkup, advice on tackling fall cleanup around the yard and garden, and ideas for refreshing your home's interiors.

Mountain Living

This second installment in our series on real estate heads for the mountains as we look at the special requirements of building and living in a mountain setting.

Doors

How do you choose a door that provides the security you need and the good looks you want for your log home? It's a delicate balance, but we'll offer buying tips and profile artists who craft some of the best doors on the market.

Plus...

How to choose windows and doors in "Builders Corner"

Remodeling and restoration costs in "Financing"

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LOG HOME LIVING BUILDING SEMINARS

The Program

8:30 Registration/visit exhibits

9:30 Welcome and introductions
Six steps to success

9:45 Step 1: Budget decisions
Step 2: Design decisions
Step 3: Deciding on a log home company

11:15 Step 4: Deciding on a lender
Step 5: Deciding on a builder

12:30 Lunch (on your own)/visit exhibits

2:00 Step 6: Build My Log Home construction slide show

3:00 Visit exhibits

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Provide name, address, phone number, seminar location and email

* Prices at door are slightly higher.

LOG HOME LIVING BUILDING SEMINARS

Seminar Cities

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Sept. 19, 2004:	Detroit, MI	Oct. 17, 2004:	Phoenix, AZ	Nov. 14, 2004:	Orlando, FL
Sept. 26, 2004:	Dallas, TX	Oct. 24, 2004:	Indianapolis, IN	Dec. 5, 2004:	Stamford, CT

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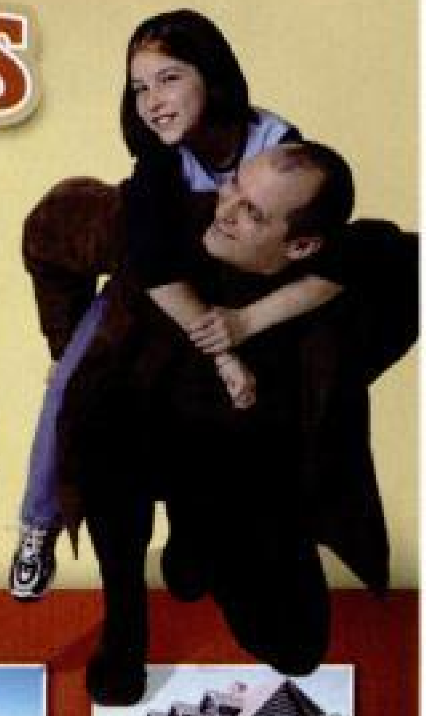

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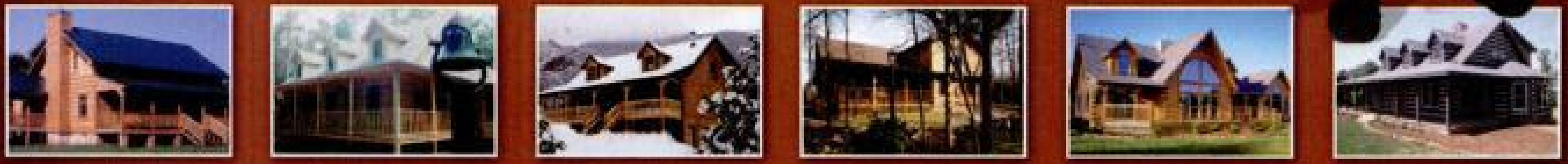

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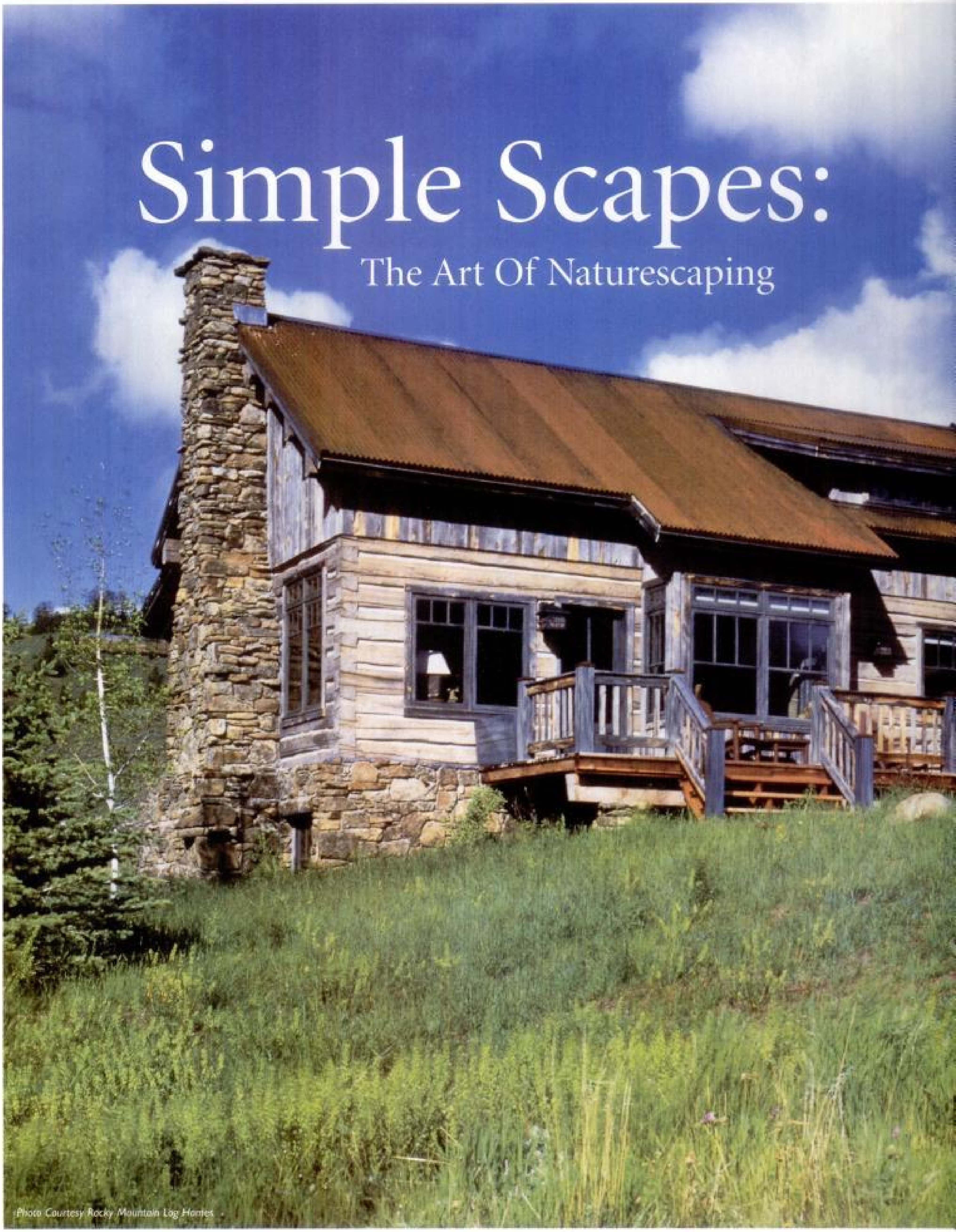

Photo Courtesy Rocky Mountain Log Homes

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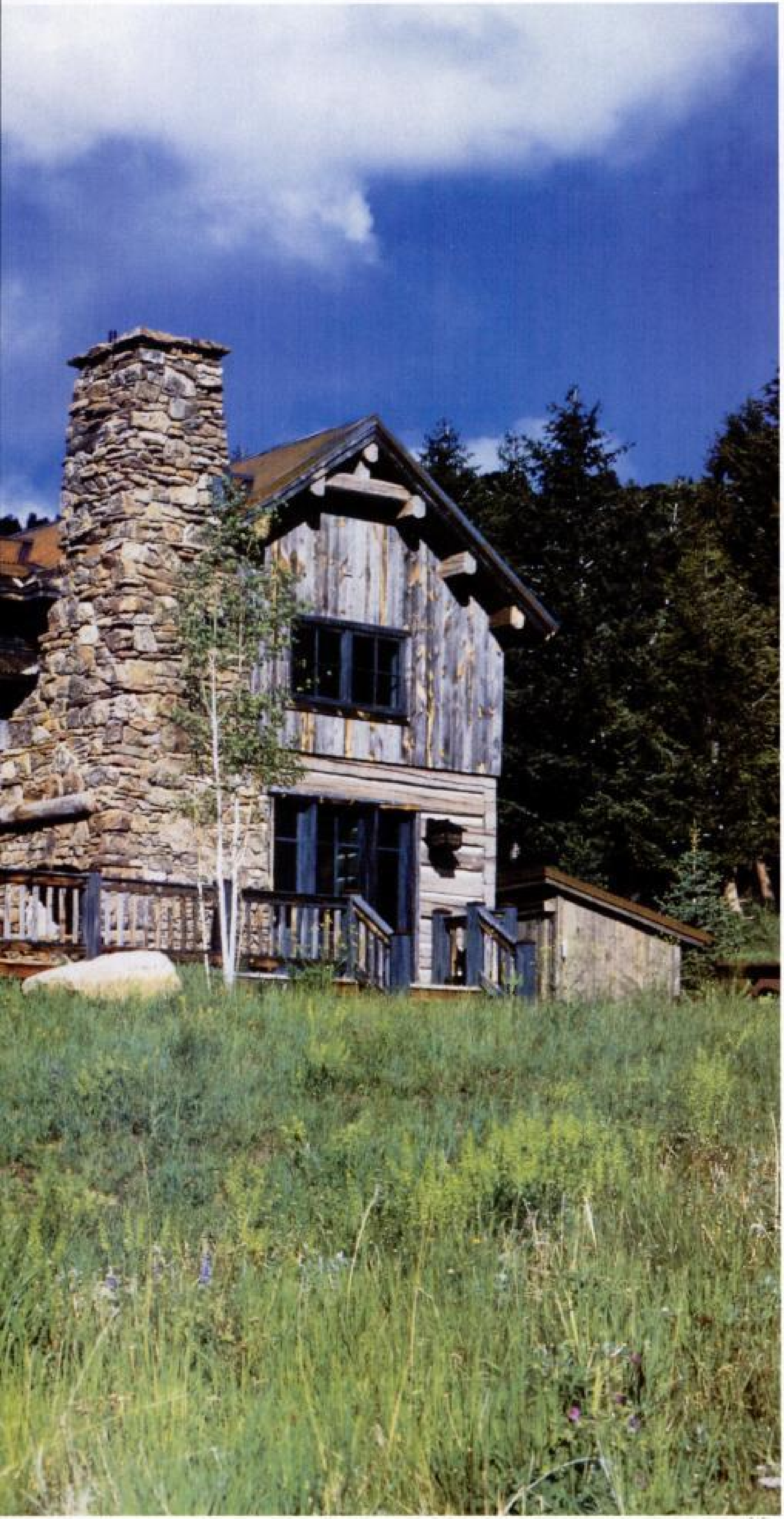

Today's newest landscaping trend isn't landscaping at all. Instead, it's an all-natural, environmentally-friendly approach to gently shaping Mother Nature's own best efforts.

You build your log home because it connects you to nature. You place it on an untouched piece of land, remote, quiet, simple. Then you surround it with a formal, carefully crafted landscape design that costs thousands of dollars to install and even more time and money to maintain.

What's wrong with this picture?

Plenty, according to proponents of naturescaping, a not-so-new but newly emerging approach to landscaping that's more alternative than trend.

By definition, naturescaping is landscaping that relies on the predominant use of native plant species to create environmentally friendly, aesthetically pleasing landscapes.

So if you like the idea of surrounding your log home with plants that grow naturally in your area; if you like the idea of eliminating chemical fertilizers and pesticides from your landscape program; if you like the idea of cutting your landscaping costs and the time and money required to maintain your home's landscape, naturescaping just may be the thing you're looking for.

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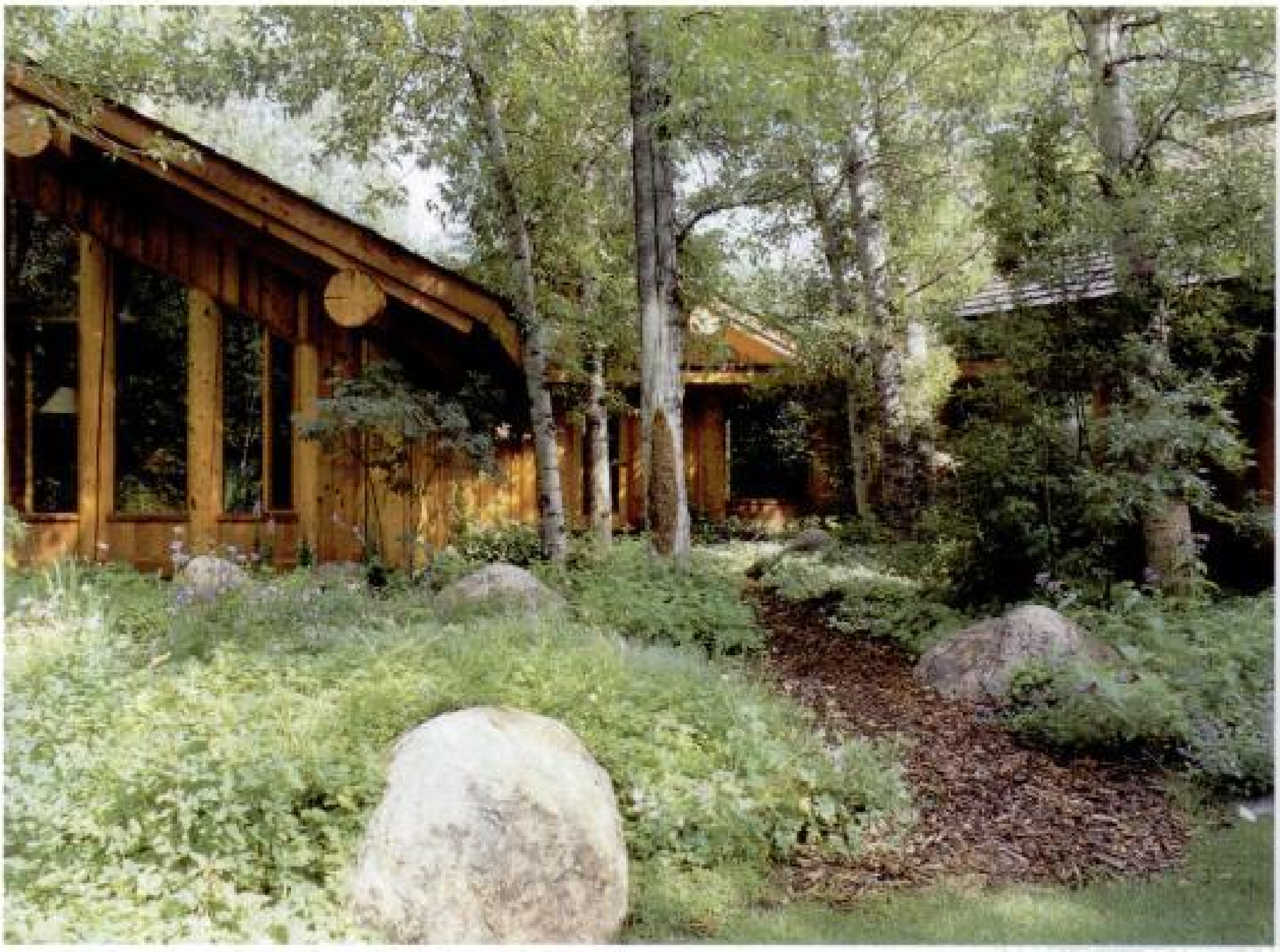

Naturally-occurring groundcover and other native plants provide this log home's landscape and minimize the amount of lawn its owners have to maintain. Bark path material and boulders harvested from the property are the perfect natural accent.

Florida's Broward County is a step ahead of the naturescaping game. With its own NatureScape program in place (check it out at www.co.broward.fl.us), the county encourages residents and businesses alike to naturally landscape their property.

The program's mission is to create and certify NatureScape sanctuaries throughout the county. Its goals include becoming a role model for compliance with the State of Florida's xeriscape statutes. Sounds very official, but what it really means is that the environment is the winner.

The primary component of any naturescaping program or design is the use of native plants in place of non-native species. In promoting its NatureScape program, Broward County also points out these additional benefits

- Conserve water by using native plants in place of lawn
- Provide food, water and shelter for resident and migrating wildlife from birds to butterflies
- Use integrated pest control practices
- Reduce stormwater contaminated by pesticides and fertilizers
- Recycle yard waste into mulch and compost

Add to the list reduced maintenance time and costs and it's easy to see why Broward County and other groups are promoting naturescaping. So what does this have to do with log home landscapes? Plenty.

It's All About Going Natural

Log homes aren't built in cities. They are built in the country, in the mountains, on lakes and islands. The closest they usually get to the city is a far-flung suburb. Add to this the nature-loving attitude of most log home owners and the fact that many log homes are built as second or retirement homes, and naturescaping really begins to make sense.

Now, if you have to have a perfectly-manicured, carefully-sculpted landscape, naturescaping isn't for you. The key here is "nature." Plantings are gently coaxed into the desired location and trimmed and divided as needed. But they are not trained and groomed to perfection.

The most obvious beneficiary of naturescaping is the environment. Because naturescaping relies on native plant species, naturescape plantings are more likely to thrive. They provide natural food, water and shelter for wildlife. Just as importantly, they all but eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides. That's because native plants, over time, develop innate biological characteristics that put them in tune with local growing and climate conditions. They are made to survive.

The elimination of chemicals from the landscape plan is key for other reasons. When homeowners stop using chemicals, they put an end to stormwater contamination. They also create friendly environs for wildlife.

Creating Your Own Naturescape

To bring naturescaping to your own yard, you first have to identify what you have to work with. Ideally, you have not already installed formal landscaping around your log home. If you have, you have a tough decision to make: remove it completely to be replaced by native plants, or leave it in place and enhance it with native species.

Since you probably have a good sum invested in the landscaping, you may find it hard to remove it. But you have an alternative. Instead of throwing the plantings in the trash, dig up the shrubs, perennials and other plantings that don't fit in your naturescape plan and trade them for native plantings with

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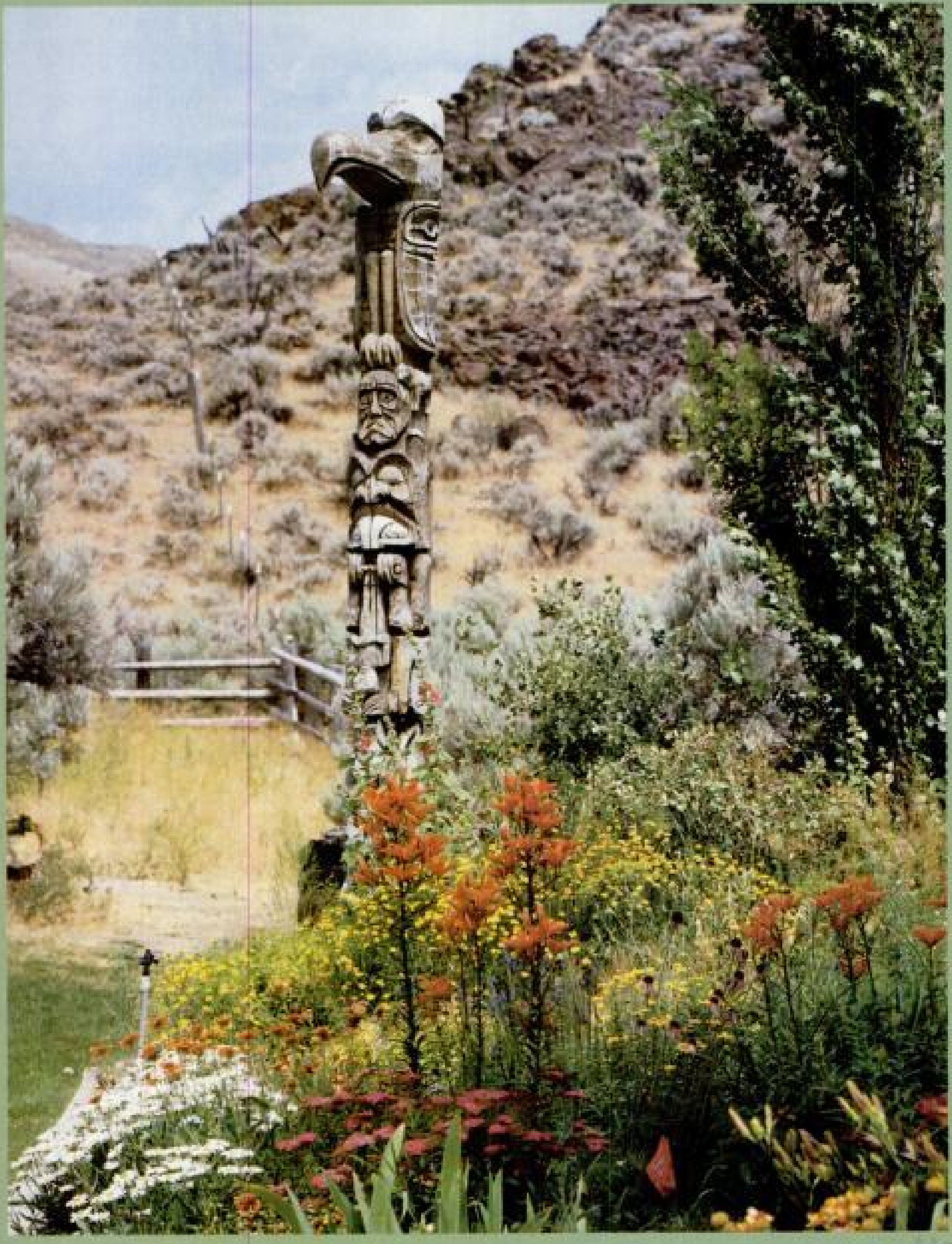

Photos On This Page And Opposite By Cindy Thiede

Naturescaping In A Nutshell

Naturescaping addresses many of the ecological issues tied to traditional landscape practices and offers a number of benefits:

- **Reduces water consumption.** On average, 20% of municipal water supplies are dedicated to lawns and gardens. Using native plants in urban landscapes reduces water consumption because native plants are water-thrifty and have adapted to regional weather cycles.
- **Improves water quality.** Reducing or eliminating the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers eliminates non-point source pollution and helps keep waterways free of pesticides and fertilizers.
- **Creates habitat and improves biodiversity.** Loss of biodiversity and habitat is a serious issue in urban areas. Naturalized landscapes can act in conjunction with existing parks and green spaces to connect habitat throughout the community.
- **Discourages the spread of invasive species.** Many invasive plant species are exotic horticultural escapees. These plants have spread out of gardens and into the natural world, often out-competing many native plant species.
- **Creates landscapes that have a regional context.** A natural landscape creates regional context and reflects the particular environment in which it is found.
- **Reduces landscape maintenance costs.** Natural landscapes are cost-effective compared to conventionally maintained landscapes, which are often expensive and time consuming to maintain. Naturalized landscapes are not maintenance free, but most of the maintenance work and costs are restricted to the first three years while the landscape is being established.

Courtesy Federation of BC Naturalists www.naturalists.bc.ca

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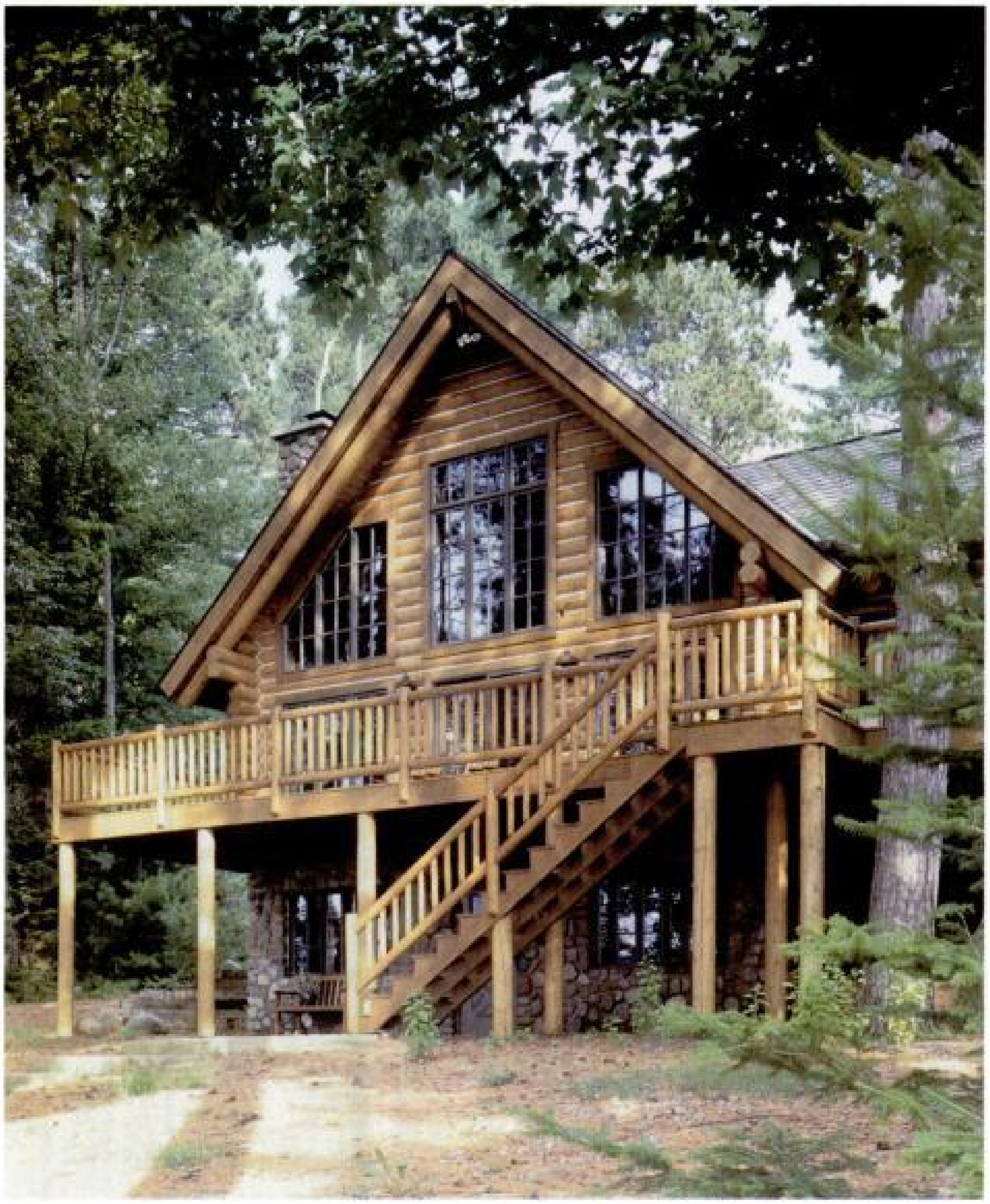

In its most extreme, or minimalist, form, naturescaping simply allows Mother Nature free reign. No formal planting or maintenance is done; pine needles are allowed to drop and carpet the ground, joining seedlings and other naturally-occurring plants. *Photo Courtesy Rocky Mountain Log Homes*

friends or neighbors who have plants fitting the naturescape profile. That way you aren't throwing your money away, so to speak, and you're getting a head start on your naturescape plantings.

If your lawn hasn't been planted or your home landscaped, your job is a little easier. Head to your county extension office or favored nursery, where they can help you with two important tasks. First, have your soil tested to determine what, if anything, you can do to improve its quality.

Most importantly, you need to talk to someone who knows your region well enough to help you identify the plants native to your area. Once you know which plants will work, locate nurseries in the area who sell plants or seeds for native species. You can also look to the Internet for sources of native plants (we've listed some of them in the resource box at right); in fact, most states have native plant organizations that offer support and resources for identifying and locating native species.

In the end, installing your naturescape is not much different than more formal forms of landscaping. Select plants appropriate for your soil and drainage types, and for the amount of sunlight exposure various areas get. It's when the installation is done that you can really sit back and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

RESOURCES:

NatureScape Broward Task Force
Fort Lauderdale, FL
Phone: 954-357-7002
www.co.broward.fl.us/naturescape/welcome.htm

Federation Of BC Naturalists
Vancouver, BC
Phone: 604-737-3057
www.naturalists.bc.ca

Native Plant Forum
www.gardenweb.com/forums/natives

For a list of state native plant societies, visit:
www.aznps.org/html/state_np_links.html

www.epa.gov/greenacres

plants.usda.gov

NATIVE PLANT & SEED SOURCES

ALCLA Native Plants
Calgary, AB
Phone: 403-282-6516
www.alclanativeplants.com

Plantas Nativa, LLC
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Phone: 360-715-9655
www.plantasnativa.com

Elkhorn Native Plant Nursery
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www.elkhornnursery.com

JFNew Native Plant Nursery
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Nature Hills Nursery, Inc.
Omaha, NE
Phone: 888-864-7663
www.naturehills.com

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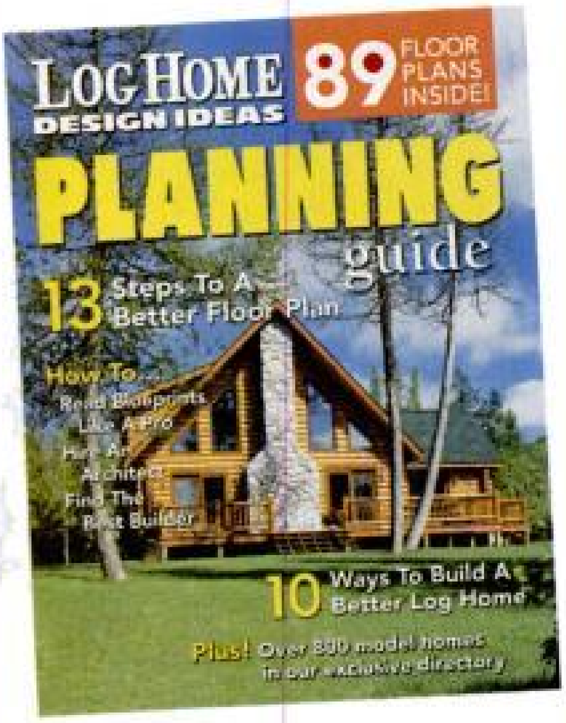

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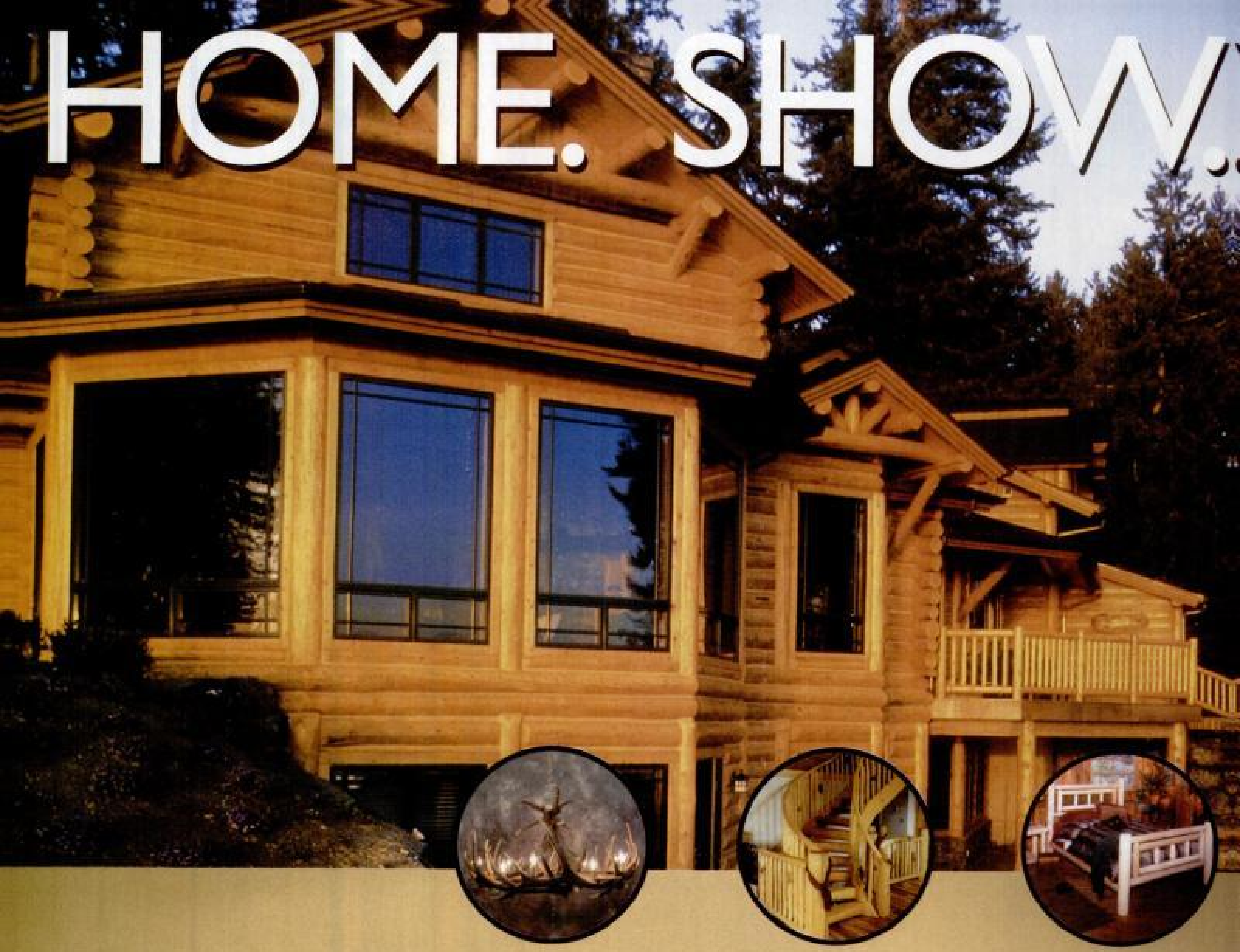

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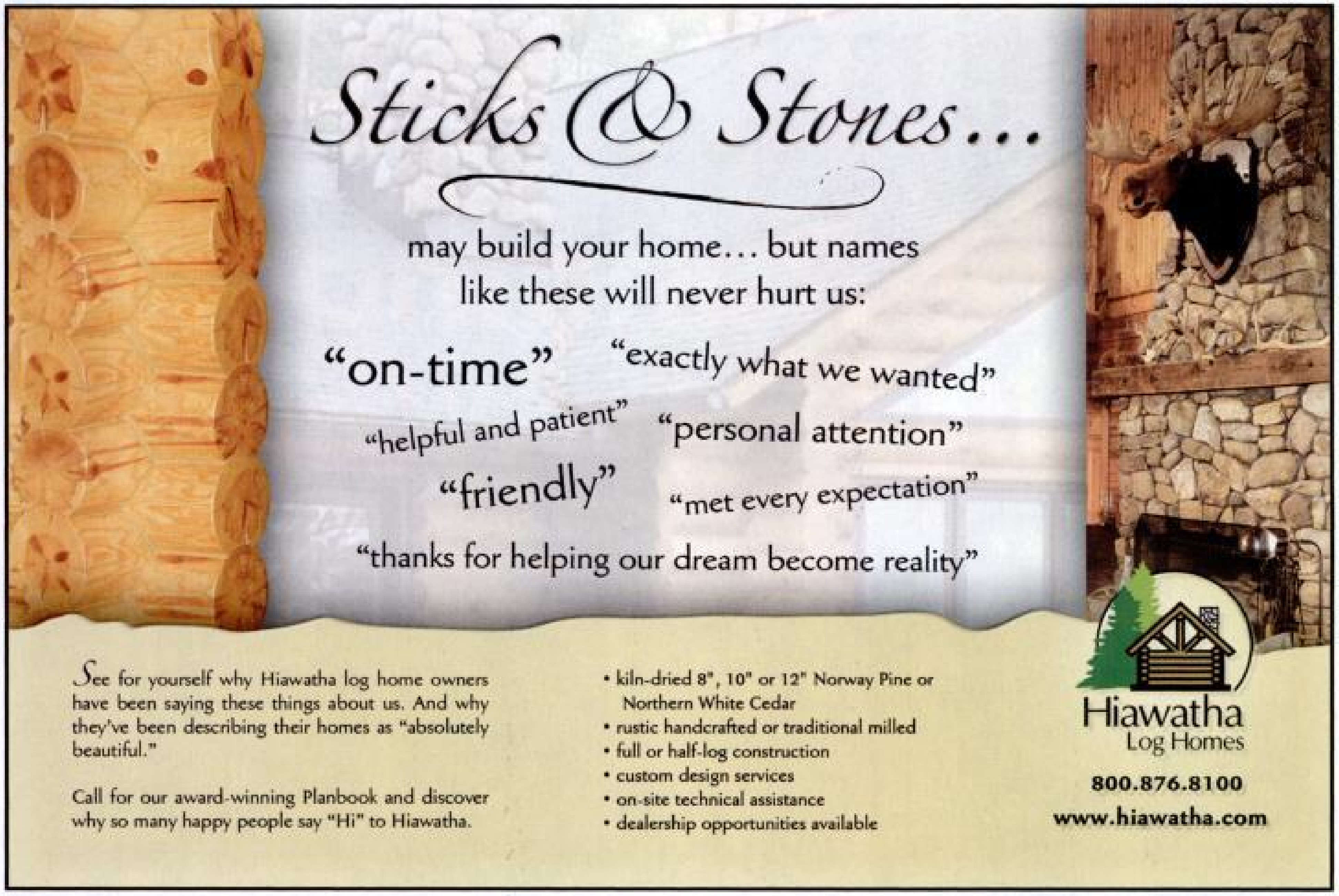

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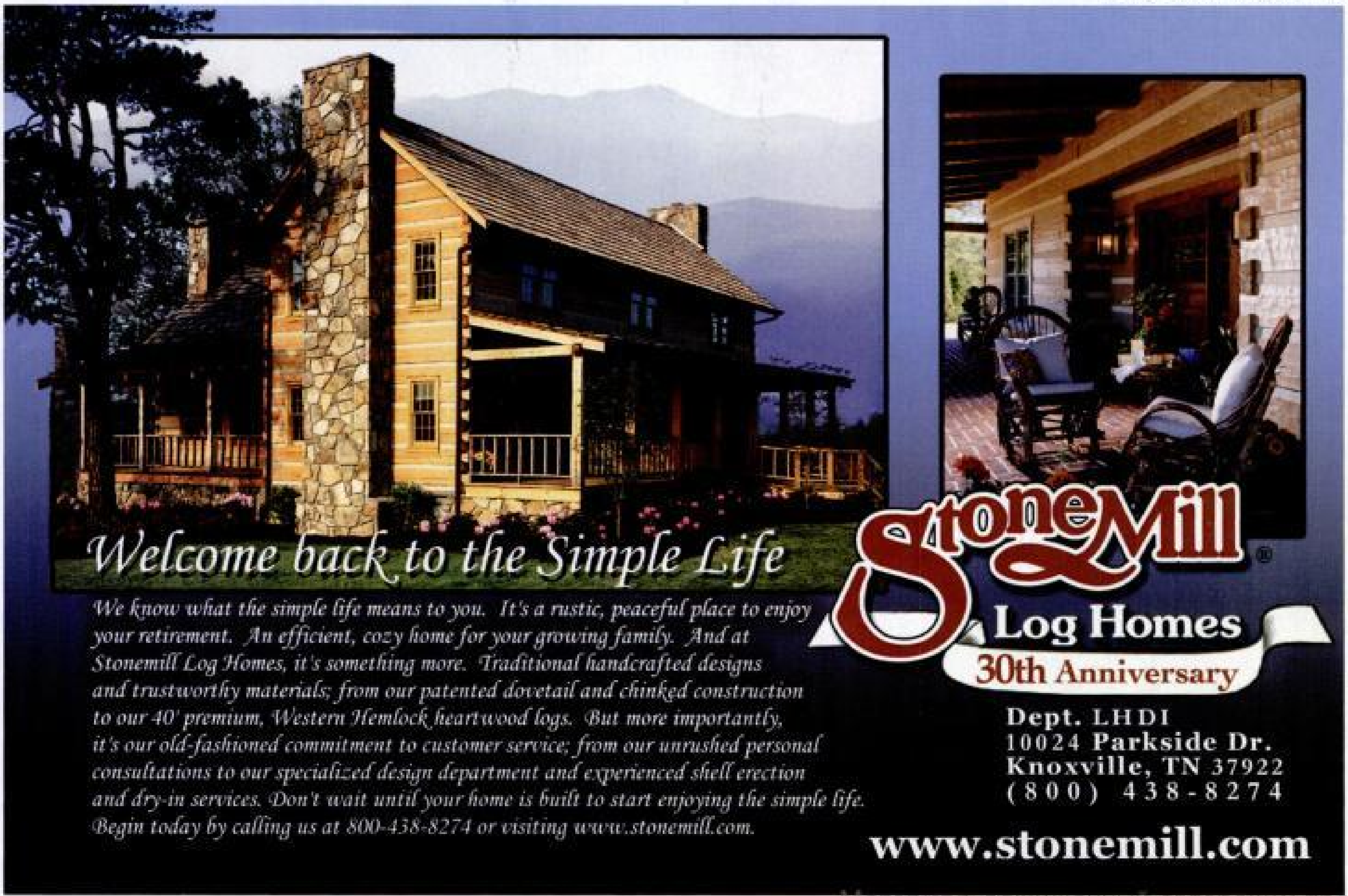

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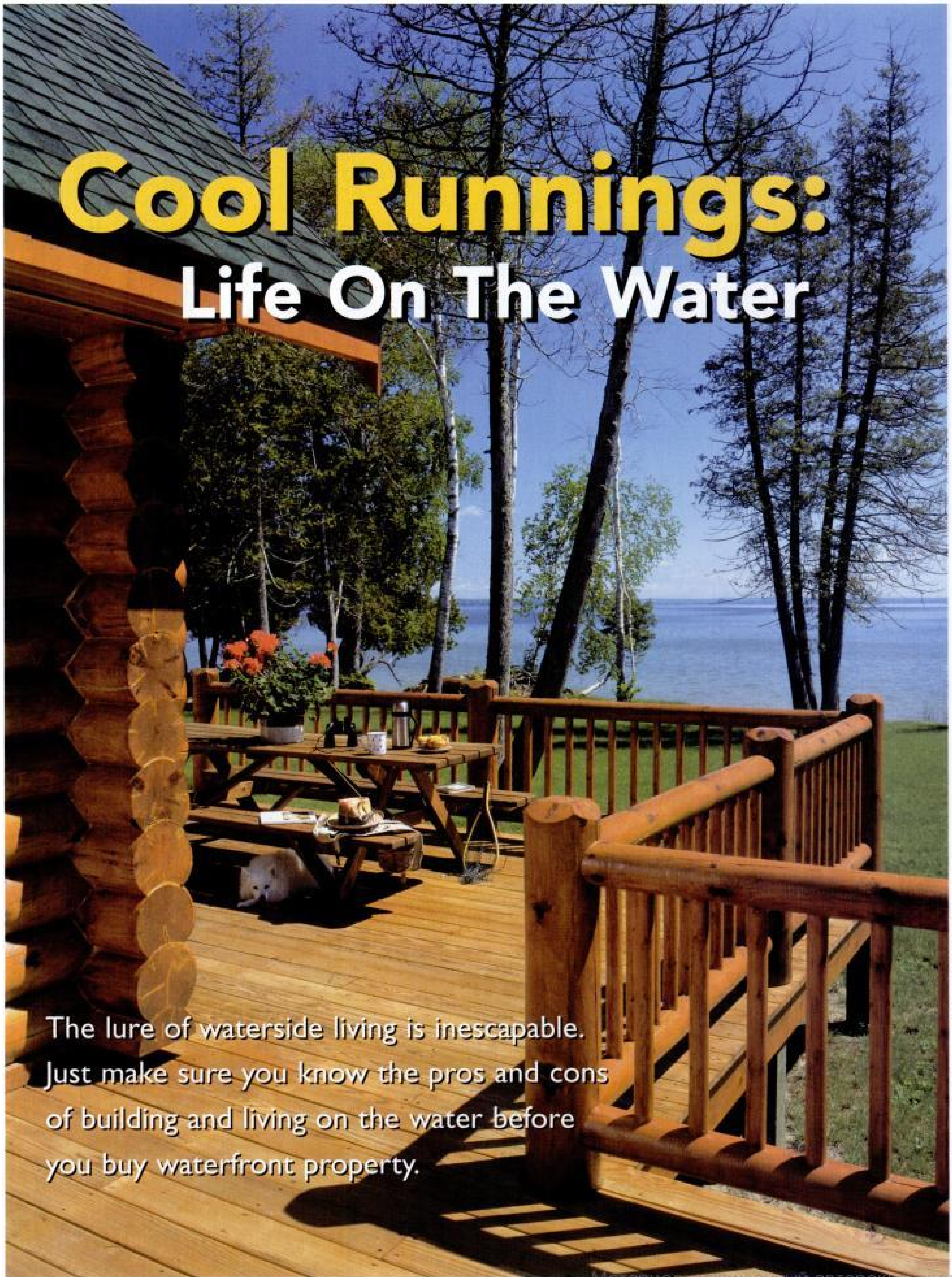
Cool Runnings:
Life On The Water



The lure of waterside living is inescapable. Just make sure you know the pros and cons of building and living on the water before you buy waterfront property.

Photo Courtesy Hiawatha Log Homes/By Brad Simmons/Produced By Brenda Kelley

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The sea-shore is a sort of neutral ground, a most advantageous point from which to contemplate the world... There is naked Nature, inhumanly sincere, wasting no thought on man, nibbling at the cliffy shore where gulls wheel amid the spray.

— Henry David Thoreau

Whether your idea of waterfront living means you plan to build on the shore of a serene lake, near the banks of a roaring river or on property that contains a quietly meandering stream, be sure you know the regulatory standards that will affect what and how you can build on the property. *Photos By Roger Wade*

Watersports, wildlife viewing, the peaceful sound of water lapping against a shore...all draw us to waterfront property. But before you sign on the dotted line and become the owner of what is sure to be very strictly regulated property, be sure you're prepared for waterside living.

Will you be able to build the log home you want on the property? Does the water body offer the recreation opportunities you enjoy? Are you prepared to deal with the special responsibilities and costs associated with waterfront living? Answering these questions must be part of your research process.

From a practical standpoint, you want to be sure you are building your dream home on solid ground that won't cause structural problems down the road. At the same time, you should make sure you are on solid legal footing because wetland and shoreland laws may restrict what can be built on the property or you may be setting yourself up for disappointment.

Types Of Waterfront Property

Waterfront property isn't limited to parcels "on" the water. In today's real estate market, waterfront encompasses a wide range of properties, including:

- oceanfront lots
- lakeshore or seashore lots
- lots abutting rivers or streams
- lots on canals or bayous

In addition, parcels that contain a small lake or pond are often included in the waterfront category since the land owner would have the opportunity to build on that body of water.

When choosing the type of water you want on or near your property, you have to think about your lifestyle, how you want to use or enjoy the water and how the water body will affect things like insurance and liability issues.

Lifestyle & Use Considerations

One very basic lifestyle consideration is tied to how you plan to use the body of water. Not only will this play a large role in which type of waterfront property you choose, but in some instances it will immediately limit the areas of the country where that type of property is available. Obviously you won't find an oceanfront lot in Arizona, but you probably will have the best selection of lakeshore lots in the country if Minnesota is where you want to build.

Then there are purely practical matters. If a sailboat is part of your plans, you will need direct access to deep water. If you want to waterski, you do not want to build on a lake or river with no-wake rules. If fishing is your game, you want a lot on a more secluded lake or river so you're not competing with public users. If you want to swim, you need to find out if the state, county or local authority will let you build a dock or float a raft on the water.

You also need to consider the water's natural characteristics. A lake will be still and quiet; at the ocean, you'll hear the sound of waves crashing against the beach. And then there's the water itself; you can find fresh water lakes and streams, brackish water in bays and canals, and salt water in the ocean.

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Waterfront Property Bonuses

- ❑ Higher property appreciation rates (as much as 20% in some areas)
- ❑ Access to water for swimming, boating and other watersports
- ❑ Access to water for fishing, wildlife viewing and other nature pursuits
- ❑ Opportunity to act as a steward of the environment

Waterfront Property Challenges

- ❑ Locating property that can be developed
- ❑ Meeting state and federal regulatory standards
- ❑ Navigating local building codes and zoning ordinances
- ❑ Being able to afford increasing property and waterside construction/development costs
- ❑ Difficulty securing adequate property insurance (hurricane- and erosion-prone areas)

A water usage issue you can't control is water levels. If you went out 5 or 6 years ago and purchased the most beautiful property on Lake Michigan, you probably can't launch your boat today. That's because the lake — and many like it across the country — is several feet below its usual water level.

Laws & Regulations

Laws pertaining to waterfront property strive to balance private and public access and use. In Wisconsin, for instance, court rulings have repeatedly reinforced the property owner's right to "reasonable use" of their shoreline but only when balanced with — and subordinate to — public rights.

Since even the smallest development action affects the quality of the swimming, fishing and wildlife watching on water — the very attributes that bring most people to purchase waterfront property in the first place — most states and municipalities have taken steps to regulate development on their waterways. Shoreline activities and development in shallow water and wetland areas are subject to environmental review and must qualify for a permit before action can be taken.

Some property may be governed by federal shoreland rules as well. Asking the seller about restrictions and researching them yourself can mean the difference between enjoying the property and years of frustration.

Before you sign the papers on any waterfront property, contact the state's department of natural resources or its equivalent. Its stewards, sometimes called wardens, can advise you on the setbacks, development and runoff limitations and waste disposal requirements that will ultimately determine how you build on the property. Contact the local building permit office to determine what local restrictions apply to the property. In many cases, local guidelines expand the protections offered by state regulations.

Lakes, rivers and streams aren't the only affected areas. Wetlands, which may or may not be immediately identifiable to the casual observer — are just as tightly regulated.

Practical Considerations

Laws that protect wetlands, lakes and rivers may limit construction or modifications you can make on/to your land and to shallow water areas on it. Standards created to guide development along lakes and rivers often establish how far homes need to be set back from the water's edge. So if your parcel is 200 feet deep and you need to keep your log home at least 100 feet from the shoreline, you will quickly run out of room for the house and driveway — or you may find yourself building much closer to the road than you would like.

Federal, state and local guidelines may determine how you amend your property. They may limit how many plants or trees can be removed from the property and what kind of plantings you can add. Even if law permits the alterations you wish to make, you may not be able to afford performing them within the guidelines.

There are plenty of practical construction issues to consider as well. Building on wet soils may cause structural failures such as cracks in foundation walls and water problems in the basement. Or you may not be able to have a basement at all. And as a log home owner, a consistently damp environment will require vigilant attention to the health of your home's logs to ward off mold, mildew and the threat of rot.

Rest assured, Mother Nature will get her two cents worth in as well. Wind and water erosion will constantly change the size and shape of your property, and may require you to invest in rip rap (stone terracing at the water's edge that is set in place in an effort to reduce erosion) or replacement soil. And all of your actions in this area will likely be

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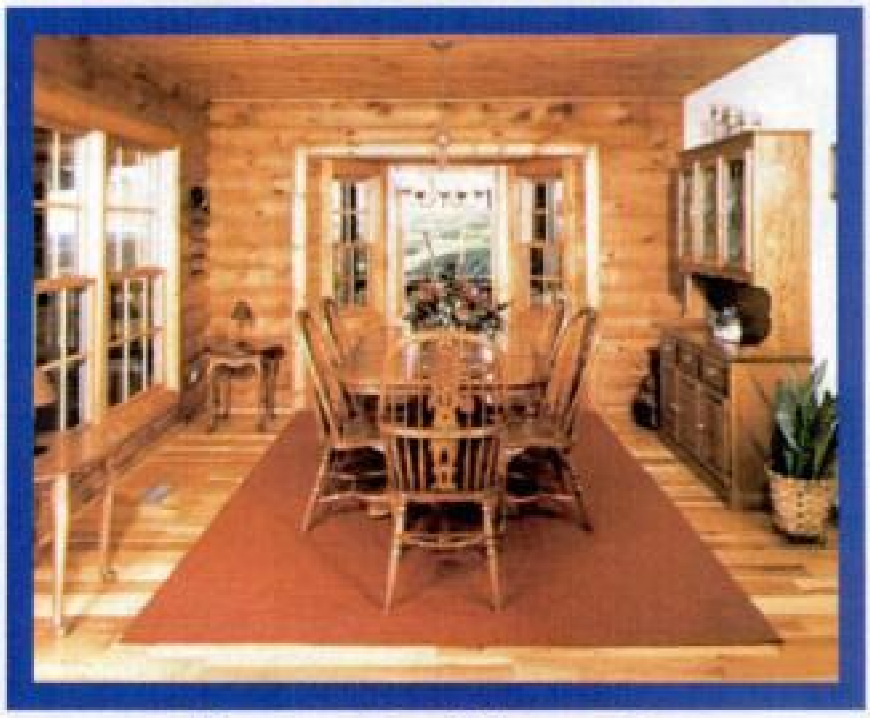

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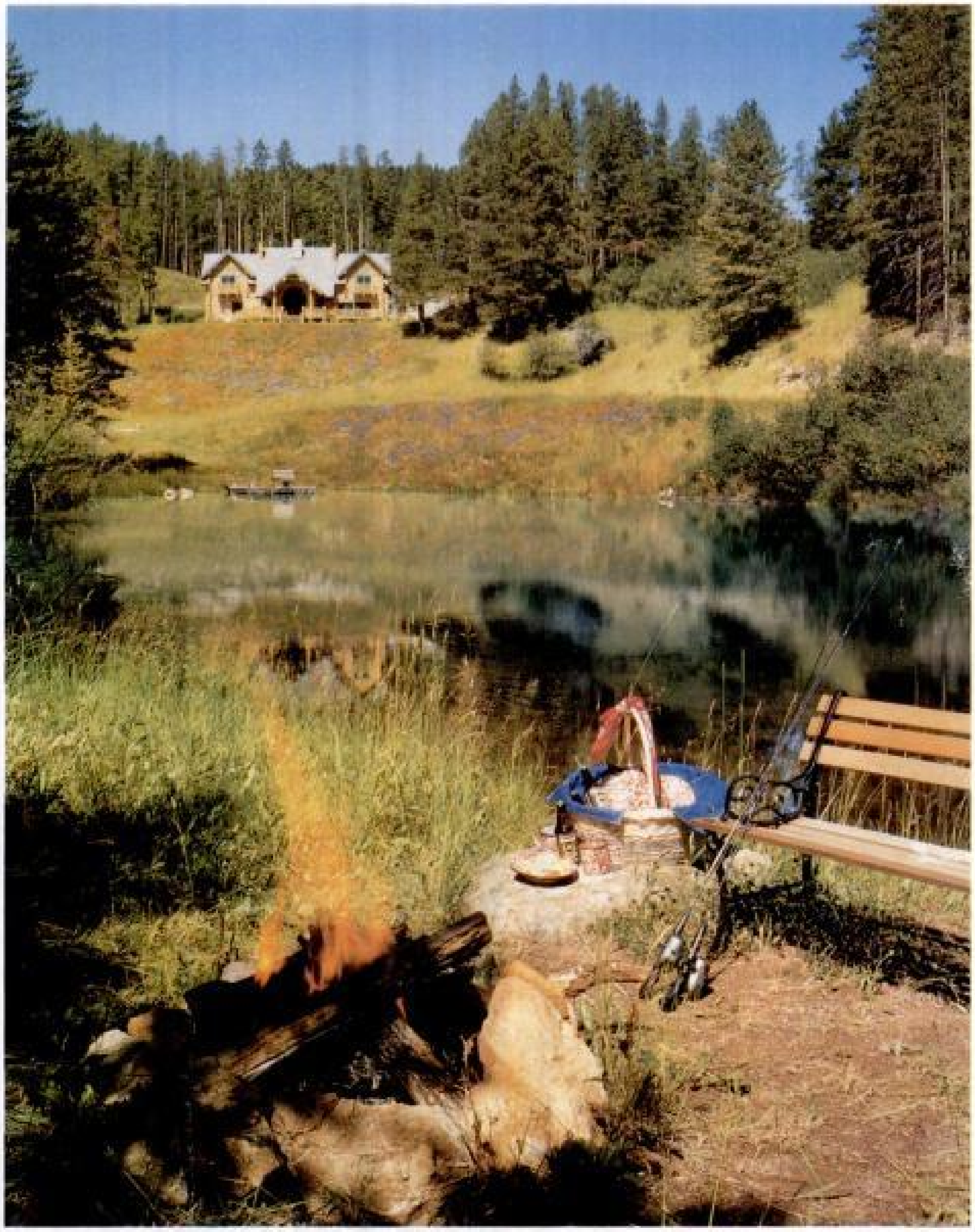


Waterfront property is often hard to find, so you may want to consider buying a parcel of land that features a pond or will allow you to install one of your own. That way you get the benefits of living near the water without the higher real estate prices. *Photo Courtesy Alpine Log Homes*

governed — and possibly required — by your state or local natural resources department.

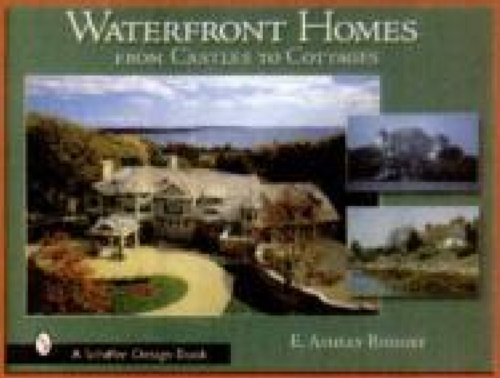
Financing Issues

Simply put, waterfront property is more expensive than traditional property. After all, you aren't just buying a piece of land; you are buying access to the many recreational opportunities offered by life on the water.

That being said, there is one financial challenge you may not realize you face: prequalification. Many brokers will only show waterfront properties to parties that have been prequalified by their lender, so you may want to consider prequalifying before you start shopping for property.

Other financial considerations include lawyers' fees and other costs associated with researching regulations and applying for usage permits, additional costs associated with property maintenance and the higher cost of property insurance.

And finally, make sure you can afford the boats, jet skis and other "toys" you want to use on the water after your live there. You don't want to invest so much in the property that you can't afford to enjoy it.



Waterfront Homes
E. Ashley Rooney • 240 pages
Schiffer Publishing Co.

If you're looking for inspiration to drive your waterfront building project, *Waterfront Homes: From Castles To Cottages* probably has it. Featuring multimillion dollar castles, rustic cottages, cliffhangers and everything in between, E. Ashley Rooney's tome showcases waterfront living and the decorating styles that enhance the experience. More than 400 color photos bring waterfront living to life in this book that also relies on the insight of the architects and designers who created the featured homes.

RESOURCES:

www.dnr.state.wi.us

www.waterfronthomes.org

www.outdoorcentral.com

realtytimes.com

about.com

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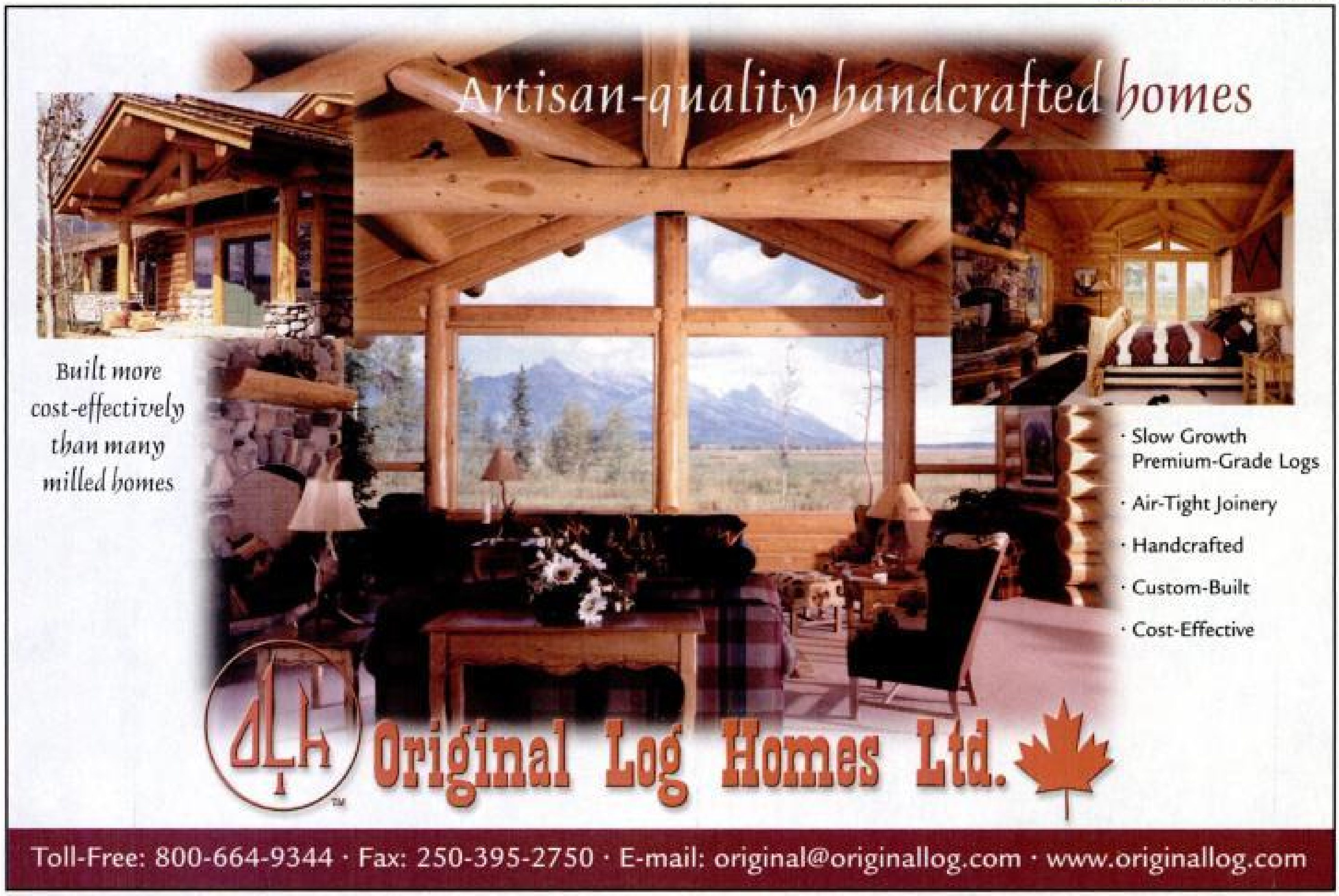

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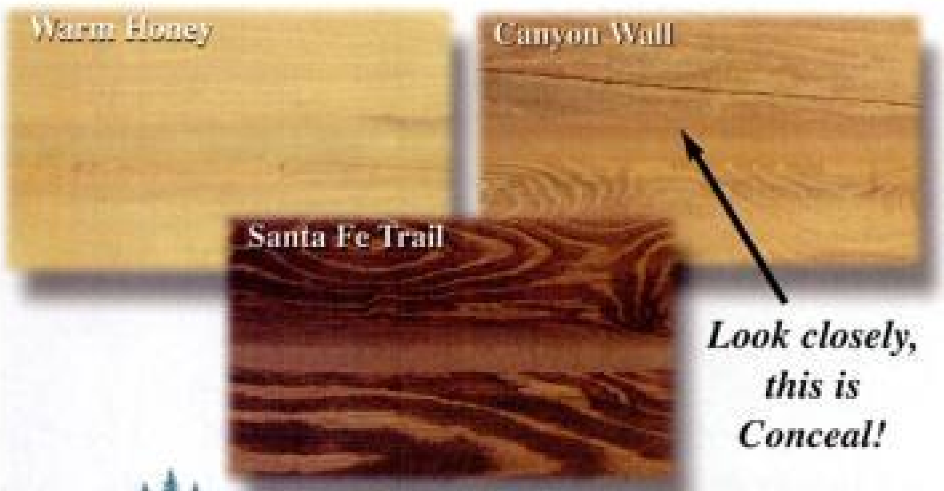

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Photos Courtesy Rocky Mountain Log Homes

Finding Your Piece Of The Rock

What to look for while shopping for property — and what you should know before you sign on the dotted line

Location, location, location. If you've heard this real estate mantra once, you've heard it a thousand times. But what does it really mean to you as you search for the perfect spot for your log home?

In its most basic form, it means you can build the perfect log home but if you don't put it on the right piece of property in the right locale, you won't get all the enjoyment you deserve out of your home. That's why few decisions in the home building process are as important as choosing property.

The problem is, buying land often becomes an emotional purchase. And while the romance and aesthetics of a piece of property are important, those things need to be balanced with some more practical considerations.

Do You Need Help?

Real estate transactions are more complex than ever, so you should seriously consider finding a land broker, developer or real estate agent to guide you through the land-buying process.

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Choose a local broker/agent who is an expert on the area.

How do you find someone who is knowledgeable, someone you can trust? Do a background check on everyone you are considering. If you can't do a formal check, talk to people in the area, including the chamber of commerce. They will know who is reputable and who you should avoid.

Finding Perfection

For most of us, that "perfect" piece of property is one that is beautiful, that includes unique or unusual natural features and offers beautiful views. But buying land is an investment, so you need to approach the process at least partially from a business perspective. One way to do that is to look for property in an area that is on the rise. Steer clear of neighborhoods that feature run-down or half-built homes.

Just as importantly, avoid becoming excited about a piece of land before you know everything about it. If you fall in love with the physical attributes of the land, it will be all that more difficult to sort through the regulations that will affect how you can use it.

Zoning regulations such as minimum parcel size can be an issue. Are there fire clearance setbacks? What about environmental concerns? Is the property wetland that can't be drained and developed?

These are all important considerations. Carefully inspect the title and deed restrictions and have a local real estate attorney review all paperwork. Another good resource is the local planning commission.

Rural Considerations

Most log home owners prefer the raw beauty and quiet seclusion offered by rural land. With seclusion, however, comes some inconvenience and the kind of total solitude most of us are not accustomed to.

Think long and hard about how rural you really want to be so you don't suffer from culture shock your first night in your new log home. There is such a thing as too much peace and quiet. There are different levels of seclusion, so it's up to you to find the right balance of privacy and convenience. The more the two come together, the higher the price tag.

Construction costs are also affected by location. You will need to find a builder and subcontractors willing to drive to and from your site, and be prepared to pay them more to do it.

Then there are the most obvious costs associated with rural building sites: development costs. When buying rural property, you need to consider:

Water. What good is a piece of land if you don't have access to water? If you can't tap into a municipal water system, you'll need to drill a well. Ask homeowners in the area how deep their well is and how much it cost to have their well dug.

This can add substantial cost to a project. You should also make sure the water is potable (fit to drink) and that there are no environmental issues. The county health department is a good source for this information.

Sewer or Septic. Although tapping into a local sewer system is ideal, it's often not an option in rural locations. Before you set up a septic system, have a perc test done on your land to make sure the land is porous enough to facilitate drainage. If not, you'll have to use a more expensive above ground system.

If you're considering building on a lake or river, find out how far your septic tank will have to be from the water. Also, make sure the land isn't zoned as wetlands. You may not be able to build on it at all.

Power. If power lines don't run near your property, you'll have to pay to bring them to your site. Power companies usually charge by the foot at a cost

Land Buyer's Checklist

- ❑ Is the broker, agent or developer reputable? How long has he/she been in business?
- ❑ Are there any access issues?
- ❑ Are there any zoning issues? Do a title search and find out if there are any restrictive covenants.
- ❑ If it isn't clear, have the site's boundaries verified with a current survey.
- ❑ Do you have a building permit and any other development agreements you need?
- ❑ What is the water situation? Do you need to drill a well and if so, how much will it cost?
- ❑ What is the sewer or septic situation?
- ❑ How close do utility lines come to your property and how much is it going to cost to have power run to your plot? Will they run overhead or underground?
- ❑ What is the soil and geological situation? Are there any concerns with earthquakes, flood zones, toxic sites, soil issues? Check with the city or county planning department or public library.
- ❑ What are the property taxes in the area?
- ❑ Do you have title insurance?

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based on the terrain. Check with adjacent landowners to see if they will share the cost. Also consider whether lines will be run overhead or underground. Underground is more expensive but less intrusive.

Telephone & Internet. If you don't have power lines on your property, you probably don't have phone lines either. If you plan to work from home, you may need lines for fax or a high-speed Internet connection. Call the local phone company or talk to people who live in the area to learn your options.

These issues all need to be considered before you buy the land because they all factor into its overall cost.

Surveys & Zoning Restrictions

If the land you're considering hasn't been surveyed recently or if boundary markers aren't clear, have a new survey done. It will show you exactly how much acreage you're buying and protect you legally.

Once you know exactly where the property lines begin and end, research the land around your parcel. The goal here is to make sure your quiet wooded lot won't be surrounded by shopping malls and commercial developments 10 years down the road.

How do you do this? Start by checking the zoning and deed restrictions. Covenants in the deed to the property will tell you what can (or can't) happen with the land. Although restrictions often have negative connotations, that isn't the case with zoning restrictions. Often outlined in the form of ordinances, they help ensure you can retain the value of your property by protecting the visual beauty of the land.

Some of the more common ordinances regulate the maximum dwelling size or the materials you can use to build your home. You may be restricted to certain color palettes for roofing, siding or windows. Some covenants restrict outbuildings such as sheds, gazebos or playhouses. Water features like pools and fountains may be limited.

Pay attention to details. If you enjoy waterskiing, don't buy land on a lake that has a no wake rule. If you are an avid fisherman, the no wake rule may be enticing. It's important to know you'll be able to enjoy activities you want to pursue on the land you are buying.

Final Details

A good Realtor will guide you through the land buying process and make you aware of covenants or zoning regulations. If you want to check into these things for yourself, use the tax parcel number of the property to conduct a title search at the local courthouse. Zoning restrictions are laid out in the deed.

Make sure you understand all restrictions before you sign anything. When you sign the deed, you are agreeing to all covenants attached to it, and although most covenants are crafted to protect the value of the property, there may be some that restrict how you want to use and enjoy your property.

If you run a small business from home, will you be able to put signage in front of your house? If you own a boat or large recreational vehicle, will you be able to park it in the driveway or do you need to build a large garage?

Have a real estate attorney review all paperwork and talk to your county planning department. They'll help you define what regulations mean for you.

If you are buying in a development, find out if there is a homeowner's association that will manage the covenants once the developer is gone. Some system should be in place to enforce the covenants.

If you've done your homework, your research and hard work will pay off.

SOURCES:

www.findyourspot.com

www.bestplaces.net

www.realestate.com

www.realtor.com

www.land-bargains.com

www.uslots.com

www.landandfarm.net

www.land.net

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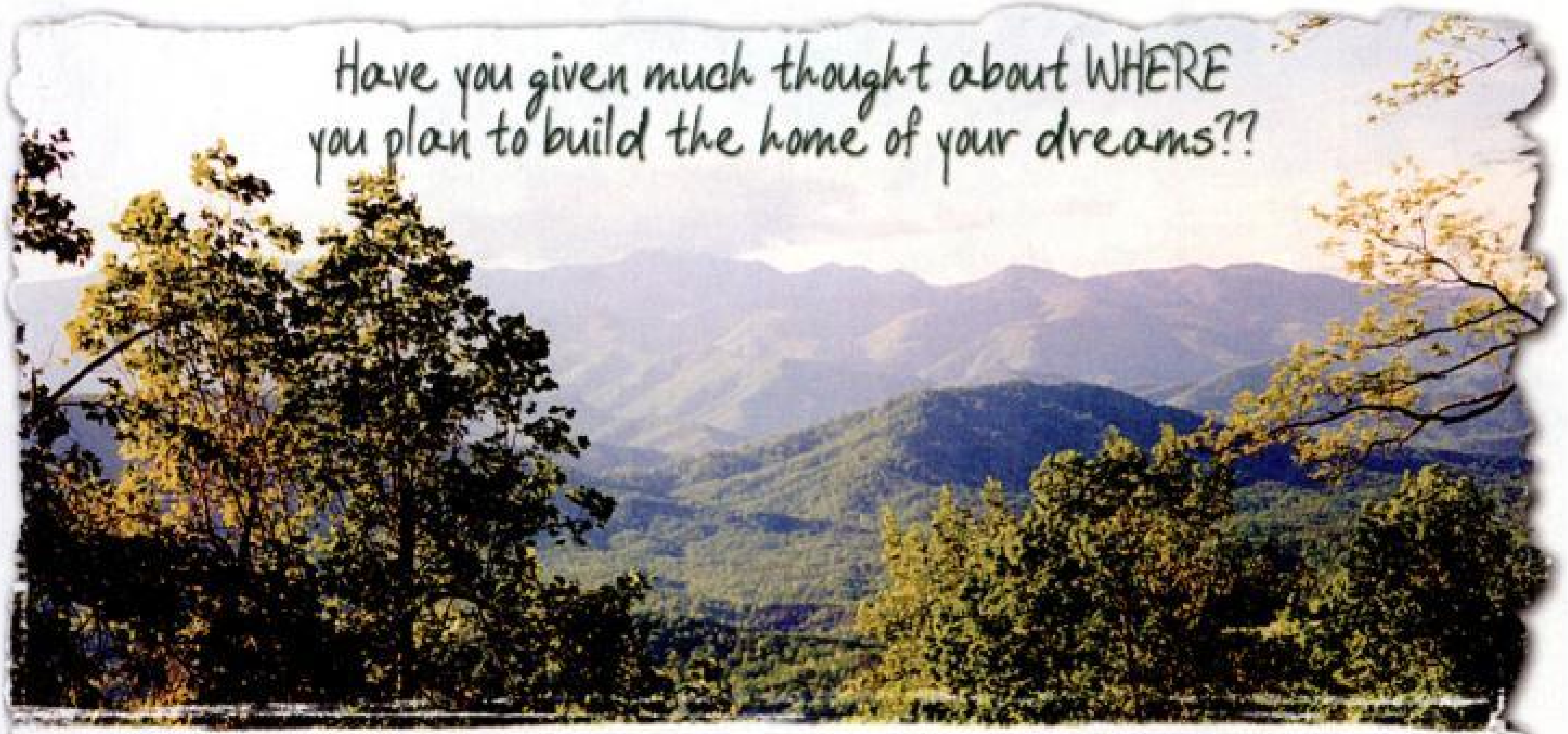

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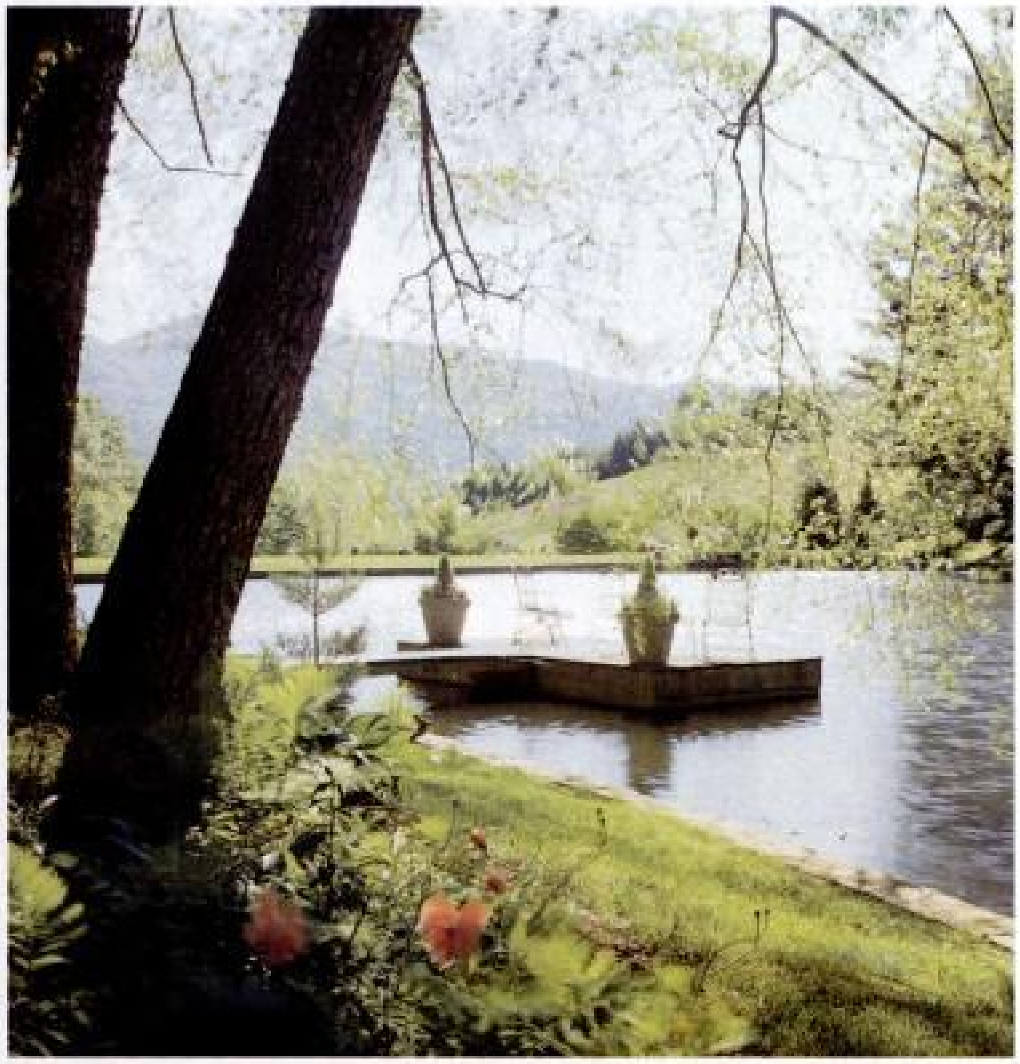
Divine Restoration



A North Carolina couple pieces together their dream home with logs restored from pioneer-era cabins

When Dan and Betsy Boyd (right) first bought their land in 1972 it was mostly farm pasture. They spent the next 30 years turning it into their own Garden of Eden (left). The large man-made pond on the Boyds' property attracts Canadian geese, mallards, cranes, herons and king fishers. The fishing dock (above) allows guests to angle for rainbow trout, bass, bluegill or catfish.

BY JAY UHLENBRAUCK PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL

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A restored 20'x20' cabin makes up the family room in the Boyds' home. It features massive 27" virgin yellow poplar logs. "Six logs make a story and a half," Dan says. The woodburning fireplace features native stone and a Buck Stove insert.

Dan Boyd had life pretty well figured out by age 10. His plans may have seemed little more than boyhood dreams, but he had every intention of carrying them out.

"In a third grade essay titled 'What I want to be when I grow up,' he wrote about becoming a dentist and living in a log cabin," recalls his wife Betsy.

He later proved if you pursue boyhood dreams long enough, they become reality. When Dan graduated from dental school in 1972, he and Betsy bought 130 acres of farmland in Waynesville, North Carolina. The property was originally owned by Dan's grandfather, so beyond raw beauty it held great sentimental value.

"I have photos of myself at age three sitting by a man-made pond on the property," Dan says. "It was a pond my grandfather built to serve as a retreat for picnics and family reunions."

The couple envisioned adding a quaint cabin next to the quiet pond and surrounding it with lush perennials and flowering trees. Not just any cabin would do, though. The Boyds weren't interested in a new log home.

"I've always liked old cabins," Dan says. "I like the warmth and feel. There's so much history. New homes are too sterile."

Dan and Betsy spent the next 15 years piecing together historic cabins to create a 4,000 square foot log home that marries modern convenience with pioneer-era logs and Colonial style.

Search & Recovery Mission

Resources like the Internet weren't available when Dan and Betsy began their search for log cabins in 1972. Fortunately, Dan had some free time as he waited for his new dental practice to take off.

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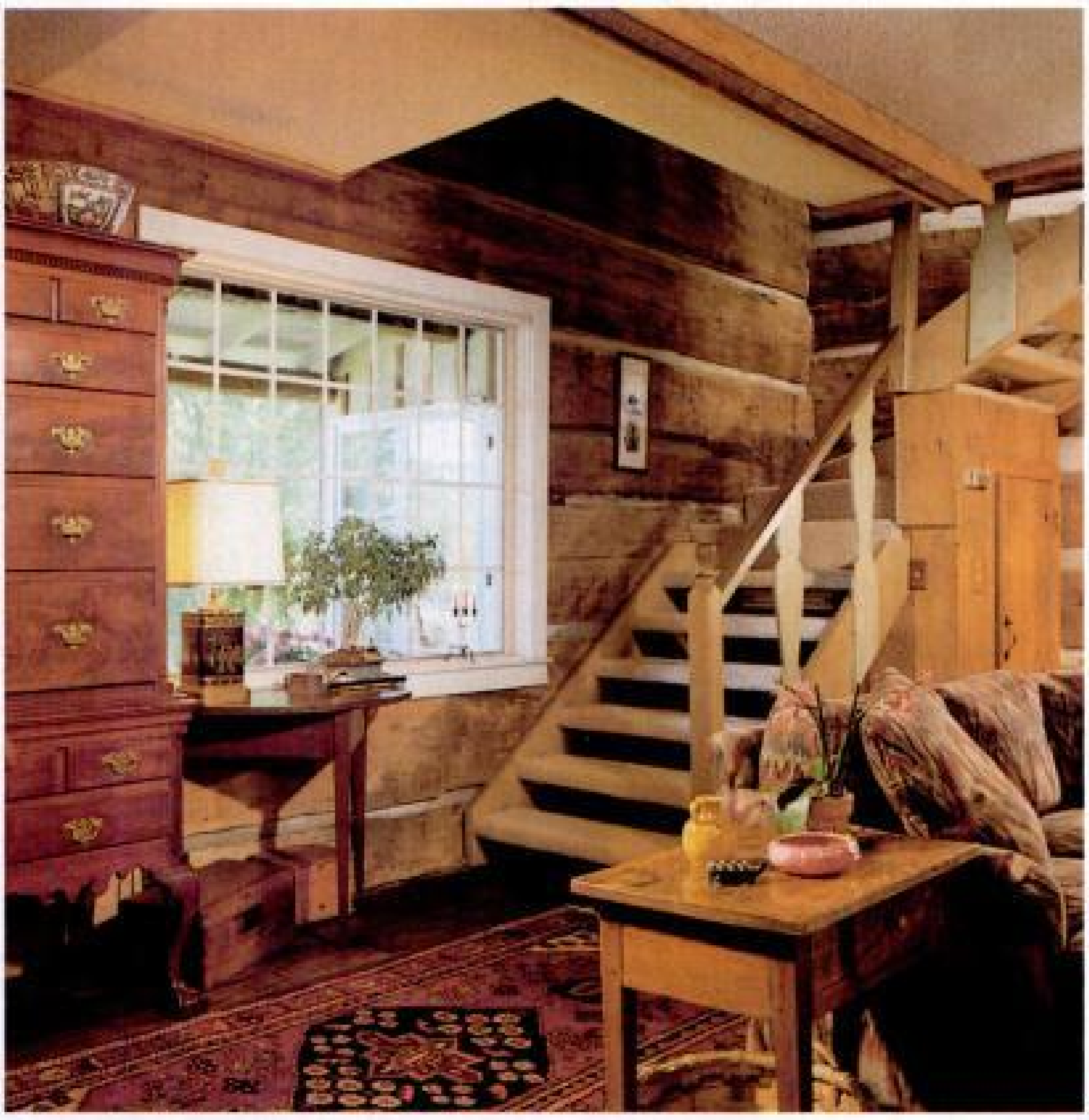
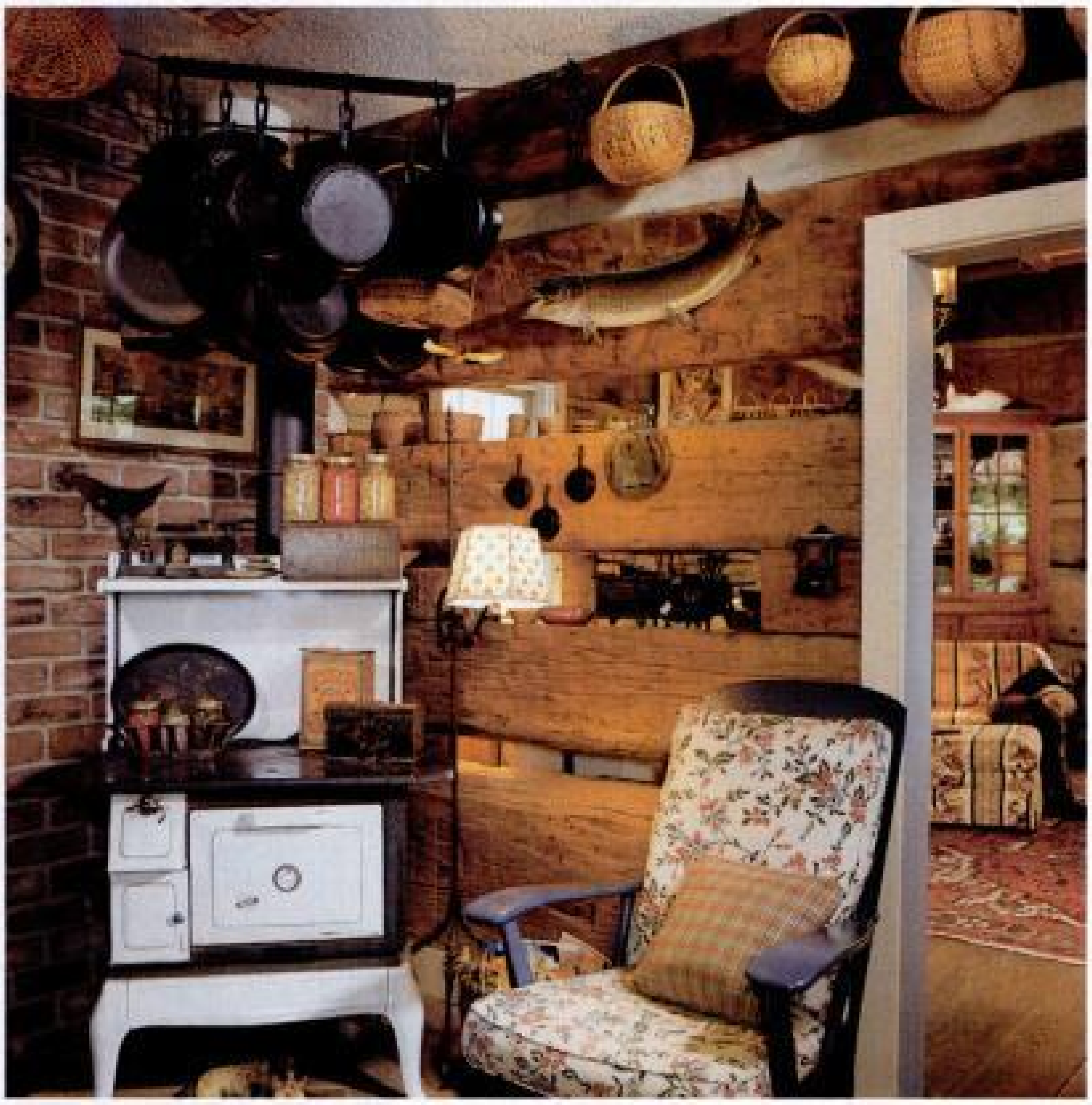




The family room (top) originally featured a smaller 2'x2' window. After much consideration, the Boyds expanded it to 5'x6'. "It took me 10 years to take a chain saw to those logs," Dan says. "I had mixed emotions, but it brings in a lot of light and provides good views of the pond." Space between logs in the kitchen (above bottom) was left unchinked to provide handy shelving near the woodburning cookstove. It also opens up the space to the family room.

Filling The Gaps

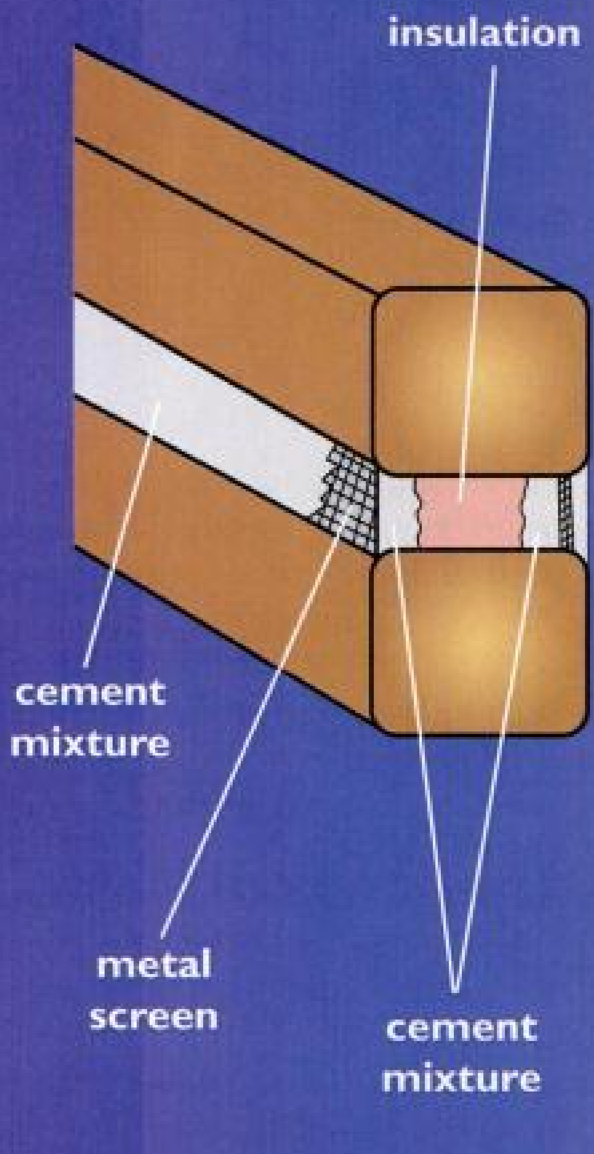
When Dan and Betsy began restoring cabins in 1973, they did things the old fashioned way.

"Commercial chinking wasn't available at the time," Dan says. "My uncle restored several old cabins, so I got advice from him."

Dan nailed metal screen (like chicken wire) to the exterior to span each gap between logs and then layered a cement mixture on either side of the screen. He filled the cavity with insulation, then added another layer of cement and another metal screen capped with more cement.

A few years later when chinking became available, the Boyds applied Perma-Chink to the exterior for additional sealing, but the initial chinking held up well.

"We've never had to replace any of it," Dan says.



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Dan and Betsy start every morning in the sunroom where they watch the sun rise over Utah Mountain. Handmade raised-panel moulding above the windows complements raised panels in much of the couple's antique furniture.

"I just went around back roads and talked to people," he says. "For the first cabin, I stopped at an old country store in Madison County and started a conversation with a couple of old farmers."

They directed him to a 20'x20' hand-hewn cabin with 27" wide virgin yellow poplar logs and dovetail corners. The Boyds were instantly impressed.

"It was a unique cabin made from matching logs," Betsy says. "The trees were so large that they could harvest two logs from each tree. The matching logs were placed opposite each other in the walls so they line up exactly."

To facilitate reconstruction, logs were assigned letters for each of the cabin's four walls and then numbered according to their position in the wall. Once the roof and rafters were dismantled, ropes were used to ease logs down boards leaned against the wall. They were then loaded onto trailers and delivered to the Boyds' property where they were reassembled by hand.

"It was kind of like playing with Lincoln Logs," Dan says. "They fell right into place."

The logs were in good condition, but the Boyds did have to pressure wash off several layers of newspaper that were pasted with flour and water to the interior of the original cabin for insulation.

"We didn't strip or stain the logs," Dan says. "We wanted to leave them as natural as possible."

The primitive cabin served as a family room onto which the couple built a kitchen and two upstairs bedrooms with logs Dan recovered from other cabins. Space between logs and around windows and doors was used to run wiring as the cabin "was made livable with amenities the original cabin never knew — plumbing, electricity and central heat," Betsy

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The formal dining room (above left) was added onto the original cabin in 1988 along with a sunroom and covered porch.. The living room (above right) features interior Sheetrock walls. "It was a Colonial cabin and we wanted a more formal look," Dan says. "We wanted it to be less primitive." Wing chairs, a camelback sofa, and brass candlesticks reflect Betsy's East Coast heritage.

says. The couple moved in May 1974, a month before the birth of their son David.

Personal Growth

In 1977, as the Boyds prepared for a new addition to their family — daughter Mary Alice — they also made plans to add onto their modest cabin. They found the perfect fit in a two-story Colonial style cabin from Dandridge, Tennessee.

"It pacified my dream of having a Colonial home," says Betsy, who grew up on Maryland's Eastern Shore. "It was a cabin belonging to people of means, rather than the typical mountain cabin."

The addition more than doubled the Boyds' living space, providing a formal living room, billiard room, two upstairs bedrooms and a finished attic. Interior walls were drywalled for a formal look.

"I always lived in a Colonial type home," Betsy says. "The Sheetrock interior walls gave us more design options. It has a formal Colonial Williamsburg look."

The add-on cabin features large windows, two stacked stone fireplaces and heart of pine flooring recycled from large beams out of a Greensboro, North Carolina, railroad station. It also features a pine raised-panel front door flanked by hand-made sidelights that graced the original cabin.

In 1988 the Boyds completed the home by adding a sunroom, covered porch and formal dining room onto the south side of the cabin. Hand-hewn logs from several cabins were used to build the exterior walls around these rooms.

The Hills Are Alive ...

Dan's grandfather might not recognize his old property if he saw it today.

"It was all cow pasture," Dan says. "We planted everything that's here."

The couple worked with the natural beauty of the rolling hills and in three decades transformed raw farmland into a finely landscaped work of art — complete with gardens, ponds and plenty of country charm.

"We planted maples, pines and several flowering fruit trees like Yoshima cherry trees, Bradford pear trees and Red Delicious apple trees," Dan says.

The couple strategically planted a wide variety of flowers and trees to make their property a living canvas as month by month, new vibrant colors burst off the lush green landscape.

"We have tulips, daffodils, forsythia, azaleas, rhododendron ... there is something blooming in every season," Betsy says.

The Boyds weren't just interested in making their land pretty; they also wanted it to be productive. They raised cattle in the early years, but it wasn't very profitable, so in 1982

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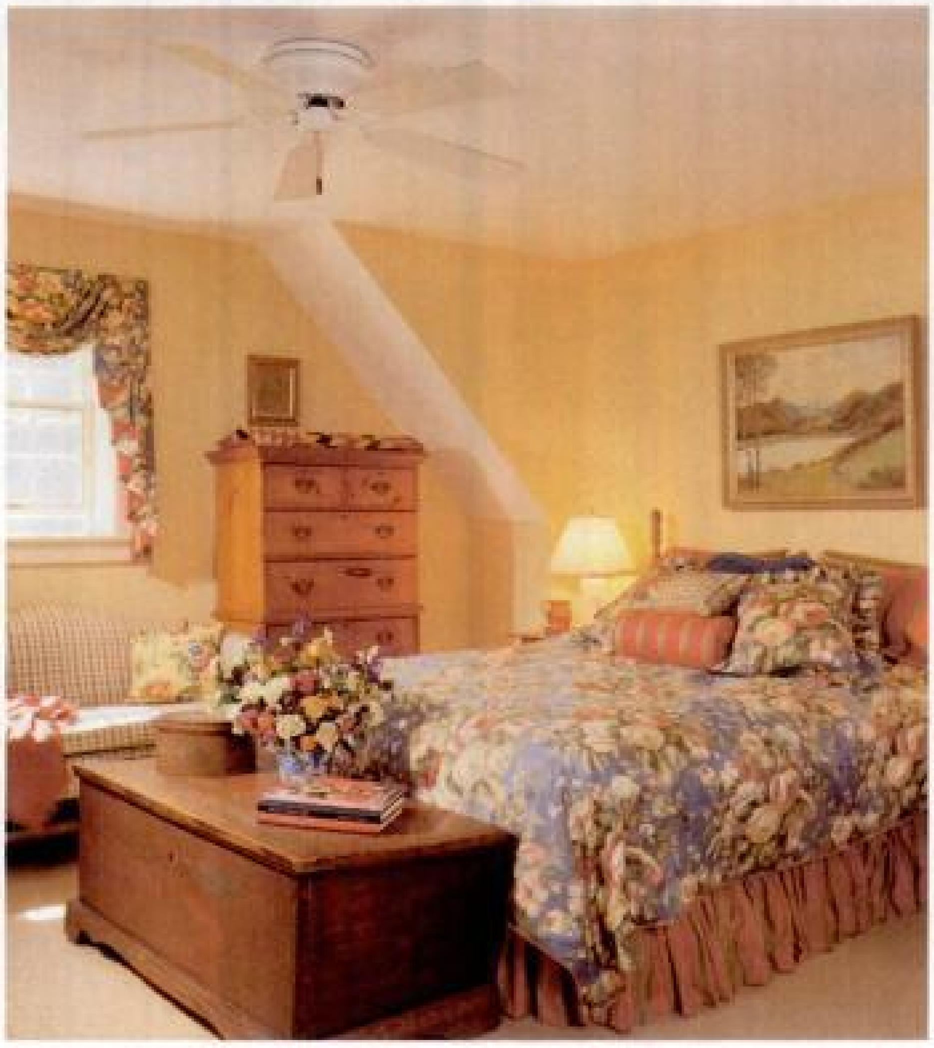

The master bedroom (left) features Sheetrock walls and antique furniture. The back porch on the west side of the home (above) features a railing made from pine tobacco sticks . "They were hand-split by my dad and used to spear tobacco," Dan says. Dan saved them, not knowing what he would use them for and he's glad he did. "A lot of people comment on how unusual it is," he says.

they started planting Christmas trees. Now they have a pristinely manicured 35 acre tree farm rustling with 5- to 18-foot Fraser firs — "the Cadillac of Christmas trees," Dan says.

The Boyds also maintain a vegetable garden that provides fresh produce for themselves and guests staying at the six other restored cabins on their property. Yard work and general upkeep keeps the couple busy, but they consider it a labor of love.

"We love to maintain the grounds," Betsy says. "It's a big job, but we both like to be outside."

Cabin Fever

Once they got a taste for it, Dan and Betsy couldn't get enough of restoring cabins. They restored a log cabin for a guest home in 1975 and nearly 15 years later decided to open the door to guests — and a unique business opportunity.

"In 1989 the guest house was made a vacation rental and the business of Boyd Mountain Log Cabins began," Betsy says.

Since then, the family has restored five more cabins on their property. After restoring a cabin every other year for 10 years, however, the Boyds hung up their hammers to focus their attention on pampering guests.

"We don't want to get too commercial," Dan says. "We're trying to keep it as quaint as possible."

Dan's grandfather would be proud of how the couple enhanced the beauty of the land without over developing it. It's a credit to the Boyds' philosophy of preservation and their respect for the history of the cabins they've restored.

"The trick is to make them look like they've always been there," Dan says. "You want the cabins to look like they grew out of the land."

RESOURCES:

Boyd Mountain Log Cabins
445 Boyd Farm Rd.
Waynesville, NC 28785
Phone: 828-926-1575
www.boydmountain.com

Perma-Chink Systems, Inc.
Phone: 800-548-1231
www.permachink.com

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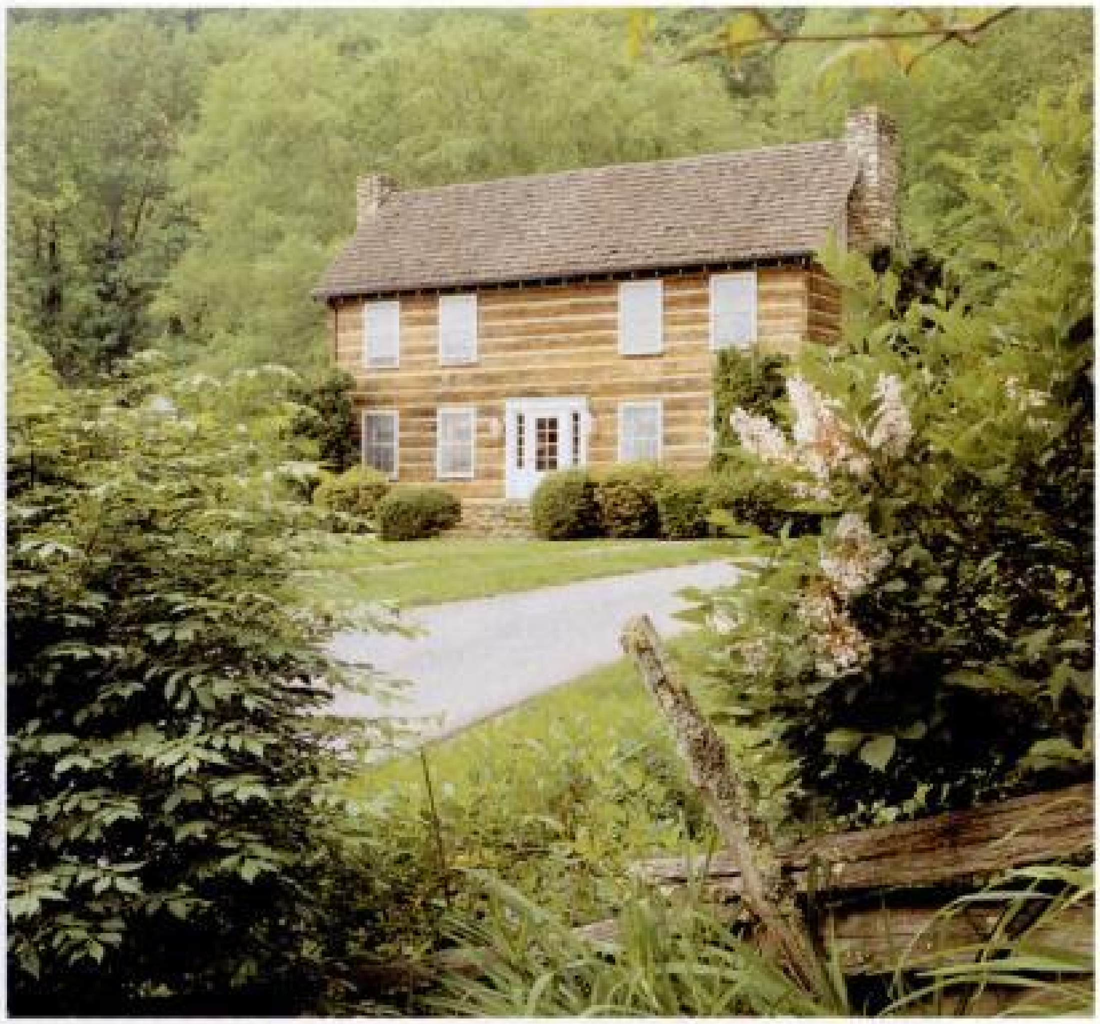


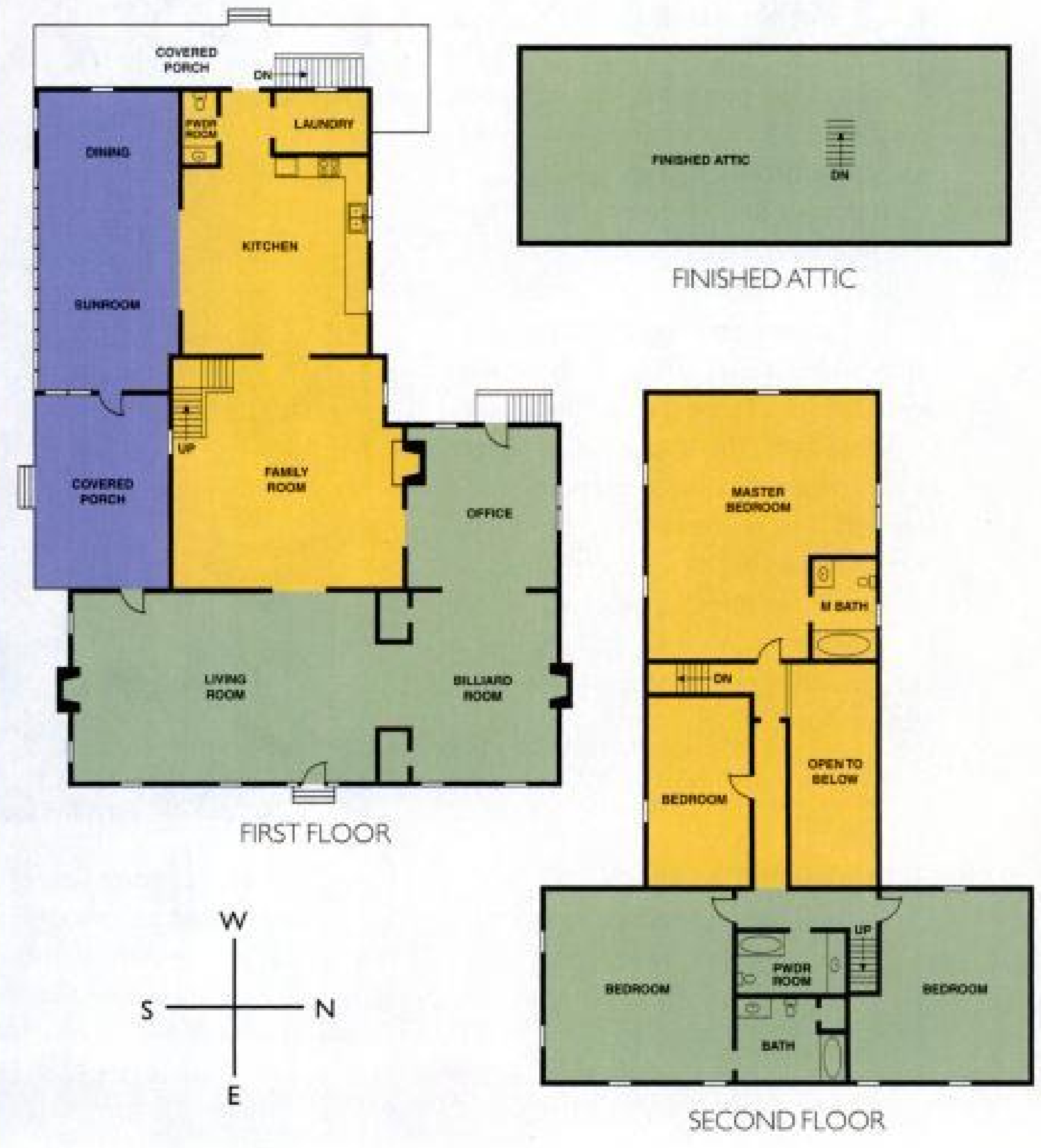
In 1977 Dan and Betsy added this Colonial style cabin to the east side of their home more than doubling their square footage. Boyd Farm Road winds around their cabin, past the pond to six other 1800-era log cabins the Boyds have restored.

Piece Work

Dan and Betsy Boyd's home was pieced together from several restored cabins. The first portion (yellow section in floor plans at right) was built in 1973. A 20'x20' cabin became the family room while logs from other cabins were used for the kitchen and two upstairs bedrooms.

In 1977, the Boyds added a restored Colonial cabin (green section) which gave them a living room, a billiard room, two more upstairs bedrooms and a finished attic. They also added an office at this time.

In 1988 they completed the home, adding a covered porch, sunroom and formal dining room (blue section).



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.Little jewelbox

A private crystal clear Montana lake is the perfect setting for a cozy, guest-friendly log cabin

BY PETER LINDBLAD

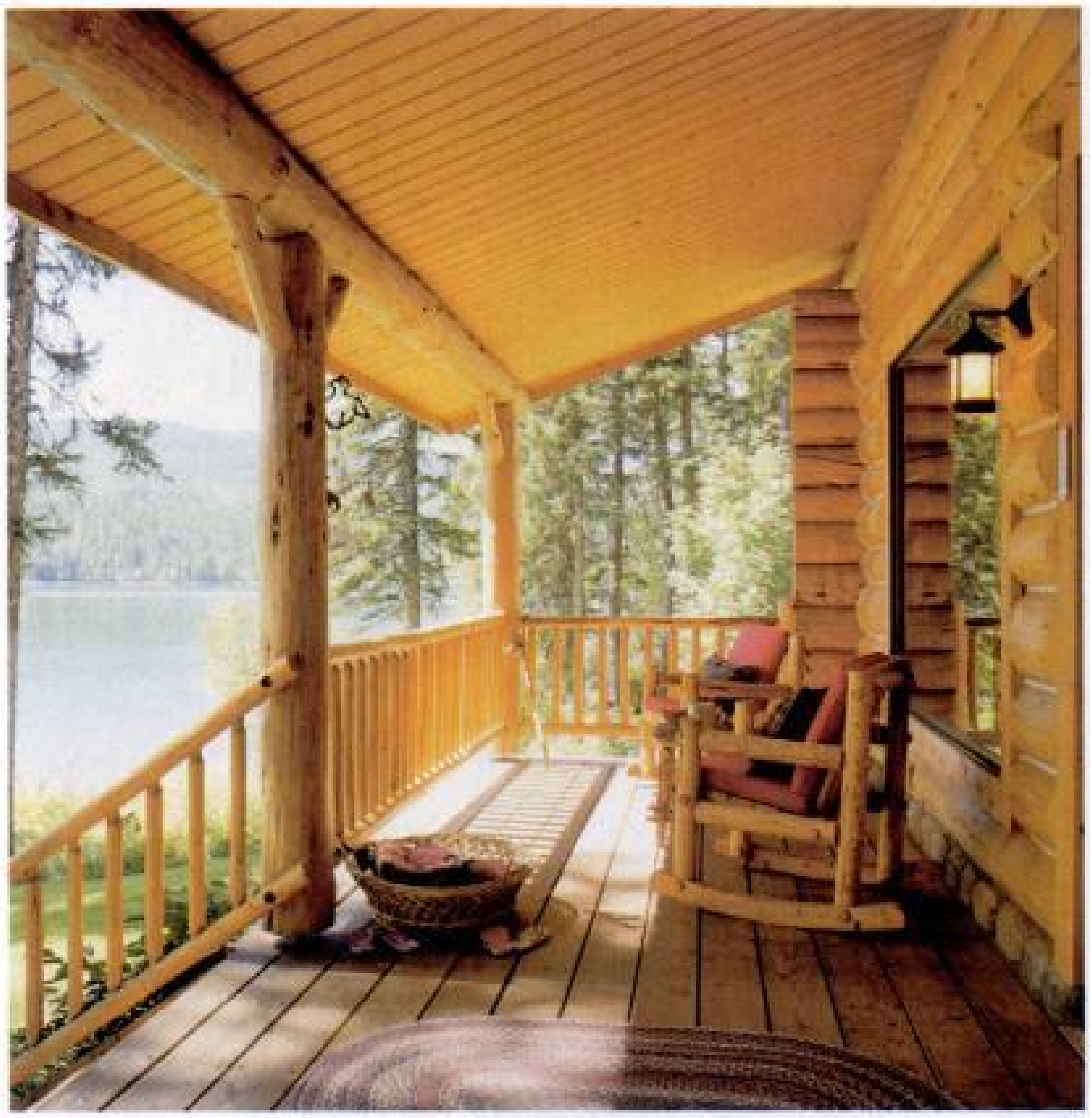
Peter Kremer loves all kinds of boats, but he's especially fond of one in particular. It's an Italian 1970 Riva Olympic mahagony speedboat he refurbished years ago.

"It looks brand new," Peter says, beaming with pride.

Before he and his wife Bonnie built a 2,000 square foot log cabin on Montana's Swan Lake in 1996, the Riva didn't get much use. Those days are long gone.

"Obviously, the appeal of the place is the prime lakefront property on a wonderful recreational lake," Peter says. "And we're so big into water sports that we sail in the morning when the winds are blowing strong, and then the lake is like glass the rest of the day for other watersports."

PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE
STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL



A 32' covered porch (above) runs across the back of Peter and Bonnie Kremer's house. It's a traditional cowboy porch, so named because of the steepness of its single roof pitch. A game table sits by one of the cabin's huge picture windows in the great room (opposite). "My wife and I love to play bridge," Peter says. "It's ideal for card games and doing puzzles." Through the window and beyond the covered porch you can see Swan Lake. Picture windows give the cabin a light, airy feel.

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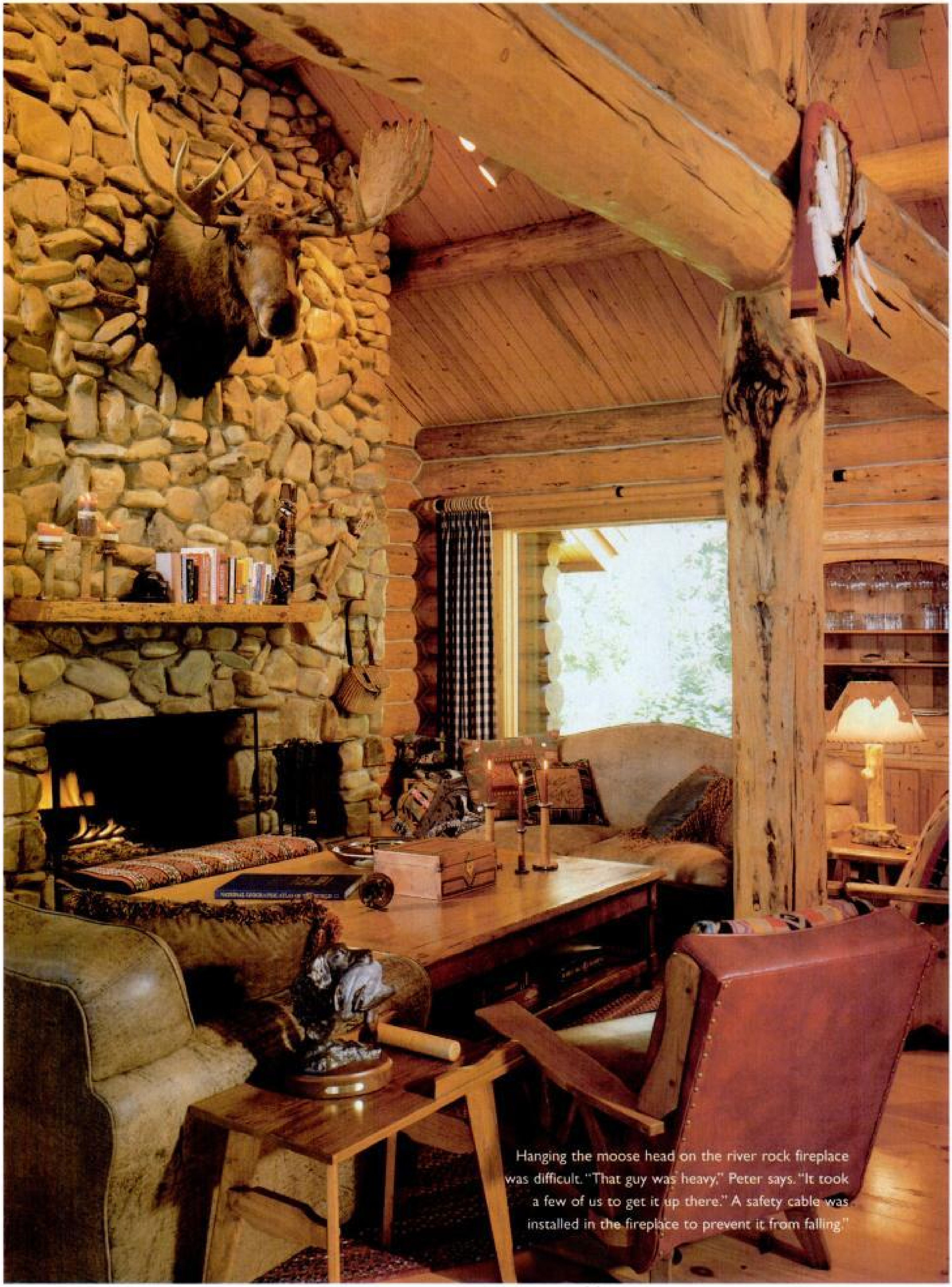

Hanging the moose head on the river rock fireplace was difficult. "That guy was heavy," Peter says. "It took a few of us to get it up there." A safety cable was installed in the fireplace to prevent it from falling."

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The thick pine plank dining table (top) seats eight people. The dining area is part of an open floor plan that includes the great room and kitchen in one big space. The original design called for a skylight over the kitchen (bottom). "[Builder Mike Laabs] recommended against the skylight because of how heavy the snow loads would be on the windows," Peter explains. "The clerestory window gives us a lot of light. Log cabins can be dark, so this was a way of bringing in additional light."

The Riva is housed in a special covered dock. Another key-shaped dock holds the rest of the fleet, which includes "a couple of sailboats, a few kayaks and canoes," he says. "The whole thing sticks out 50 feet from the shore."

Mike Roessmann, president of Snow Country Construction, worked on the house and helped build the dock. "There's a lot of function included in the design of that dock," he says.

The same can be said of the cabin, which Peter describes as a "high-quality jewel box log home."

Impulse Buy

Walking into the cabin you can't help but be struck by the lake view. "You come in and you say, 'Wow,'" Peter notes. "As soon as you're inside, you see that view all the way through this beautiful log structure."

Swan Lake is situated in a valley between the Mission and Bob Marshall Wilderness mountain ranges. Peter visited it while looking for property on nearby Flathead Lake. One look was all he needed.

"I had a chance to see Swan Lake and I fell in love," he says. "There were a couple of lots available and I bought them the day I saw the lake."

He's never regretted the purchase. Free of commercial development, the lake is in pristine condition. "It's an all-natural lake and the pine trees come right down to the water's edge," Peter says. "I was born back east, but my family moved to Oregon when I was a boy and I have very fond memories of spending time on small lakes like this."

The clear water is just part of the property's charm. Mature evergreens and deciduous trees provide all the privacy the Kremers could want.

"We have lots on either side of us, but we can't see any

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The master bedroom has a great view of Swan Lake on one side and the Flathead National Forest on the other. All of the home's interior walls that are not logs are made of cedar.

structures on either side," he says. "It's a nice distance from the neighbors and there's a number of trees. Across the lake you can see four or five houses, but there's a low population density and there's a lot of wilderness."

It's been that way for years. The Kremers' land is part of an unusual private land holding within the Flathead National Forest that used to be the property of one of the railroad companies that helped develop the West.

"Years ago, when the railroad company owned the land, it would enter into license for lease permits for people to build cabins," Peter says. "The cabin owners later got together and bought out the fee. That's how it got to be a private holding. I guess it was common back when the West was being developed."

Indigenous Design

Seven years after buying the property, the Kremers built their log cabin on the lake. The setting was ideal for a log cabin.

A long-time real estate developer and investor, Peter wasn't interested in going against the grain. He worked with architect Janet Jarvis of The Jarvis Group Architects to custom design a log retreat that blends with the wooded lakeside lot.

"Some people buy a rustic lot and build a house that looks like it belongs in a city subdivision," Peter says. "This cabin looks like it was built a long time ago and it was designed to look like it was indigenous to the site."

The Kremers had worked with Jarvis before. "I did their home in Ketchum, Idaho in the mid-1980s," Janet says. "We kept in touch, and I helped them with several remodels."

With a primary home in Idaho and a second home in Newport Beach, California, Bonnie let Peter design the cabin the way he wanted. He kept it simple.

"It's a very efficient plan, with a master bedroom on one side of the great room and two bedrooms on the other side," he says. "The key things were a comfortable great room, a massive stone fireplace and big picture windows looking out onto the lake and into the forest. It's just a warm, cozy cabin with very little lost space to hallways. Almost all of the space is livable, usable space."

Perfect Fit

Once the drawings were finished, Peter took them to Mountain View Log Homes. The Montana log home company was only 40 miles away and came highly recommended.

"The decision to use Mountain View was based on some log homes they did in the area that I had seen," Peter says. "I interviewed several people and came away impressed with their personal attention and their attention to detail. I interviewed three or four log home companies, but I felt the quality of [Mountain View's] product and the proximity made them the best choice."

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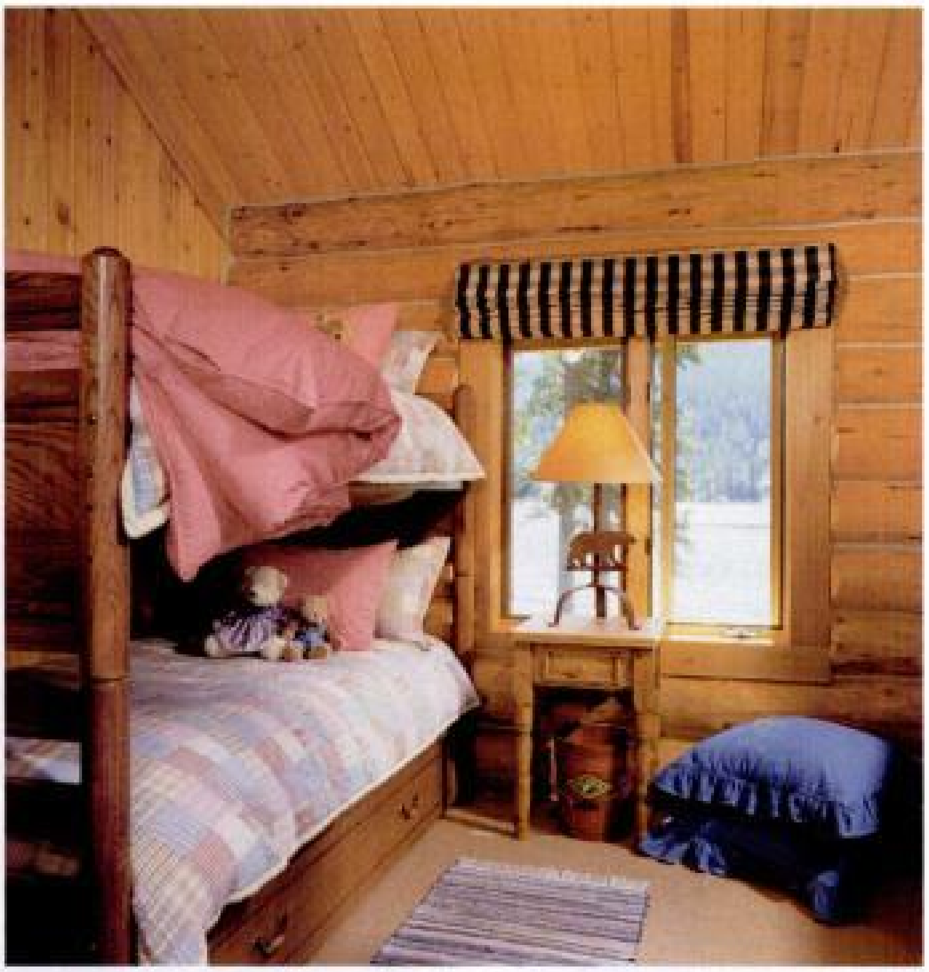

One of three bedrooms in the main house, this bunkroom (above) is strictly for the kids. The Kremers have eight grandchildren. The master bathroom (top) is one of three baths in the cabin. Each bath features a double sink, allowing two people to wash up at one time. The claw foot tub in the master bath offers a luxurious bathing experience. There is also a separate shower.

Mountain View crafted a log shell consisting of hand-hewn lodgepole pine logs that average 9"-11" in diameter. The home was built in Mountain View's log yard, then dissassembled and shipped to the Kremers' building site, where it was reassembled by builder Mike Laabs in a little over a year.

The combination of Laabs's skill and Mountain View's quality was a winner.

"They do very nice custom work," Peter says. "The corners are Swedish Cope and the logs fit tight, but we also decided to go with chinking to further prevent air infiltration."

A few years ago, Laabs was killed in a hiking accident. "It was a tragic loss," Peter says. "He was a dear friend and a great builder."

Adding On

It may be small, but the Kremer cabin is anything but ordinary.

"We wanted it to be a relatively small and intimate structure, but we used all high-quality finishes and materials," Peter says. "I was also a home builder, so I had a pretty good idea what I wanted. There's no drywall and it has all (wide-plank) wood floors made of pine. The interior walls are made of cedar and we wanted wood ceilings with exposed log trusses. It's not a budget cabin. It's very luxurious and very comfortable."

One thing Peter insisted on was that each of the three bedrooms have its own bath outfitted with double sinks, which makes guests happy. "People prefer having a bath with their bedroom," Peter says. "It's nice when everybody is showering and cleaning up for the barbeque."

Peter tried to think of everything during the design phase. What he couldn't foresee was how big the Kremer family would grow. Bonnie and Peter now have eight grandchildren. Needing more room to house people, the Kremers decided to attach an 800 square foot guest cabin to the house.

"They wanted the house to be more about family than how big they could make the bedrooms," Jarvis says. "They wanted it to be a place where family and friends could visit."

Western Exposure

Jarvis likes the relationship between the cabin and its surroundings. "It relates to the lake in a positive way," she says. "They wanted their place on Golden Pond."

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The cabin sits more than 50 feet from Swan Lake, according to setback requirements. Peter Kremer wouldn't have it any other way. "I would have put it back at least 50 feet even if it wasn't a requirement," Peter says. "It's more attractive to look at the cabin from the lake when you've got a few trees in between." Notice the pathways of stone (above) sculpted into the landscape by Jim Doepker. The stone is native to Montana. The Kremers built a special dock to house Peter's mahogany 1970 Riva Olympic (right), an Italian speedboat he refurbished.

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Stepping Stone

It's a short walk from the Kremer cabin to Swan Lake. To reach the water, you walk down about 10 thick native stone steps created by landscaper Jim Doepker.

"He's a talented landscaper," Peter Kremer says. "He understands both design and installation. The crew did a magnificent job with all that natural stone."

The big slabs are 6" thick and form a pathway that's sculpted into the landscape and leads from the cabin's porch to the docks.

"When you quarry it, it comes out in big slabs that are ideal for patios," Peter adds. "We have a portable spa that sits in what is in effect a patio that we take down in the fall and install in the spring."

And the Kremers got it, right down to the 32' covered porch that looks out on Swan Lake. "It's a delightful environment to sit on a log rocker and watch the activity on the water and sip lemonade," Peter says.

It was important to cover the porch. Otherwise, the setting western sun would shine through big picture windows that line the great room and bring in too much heat.

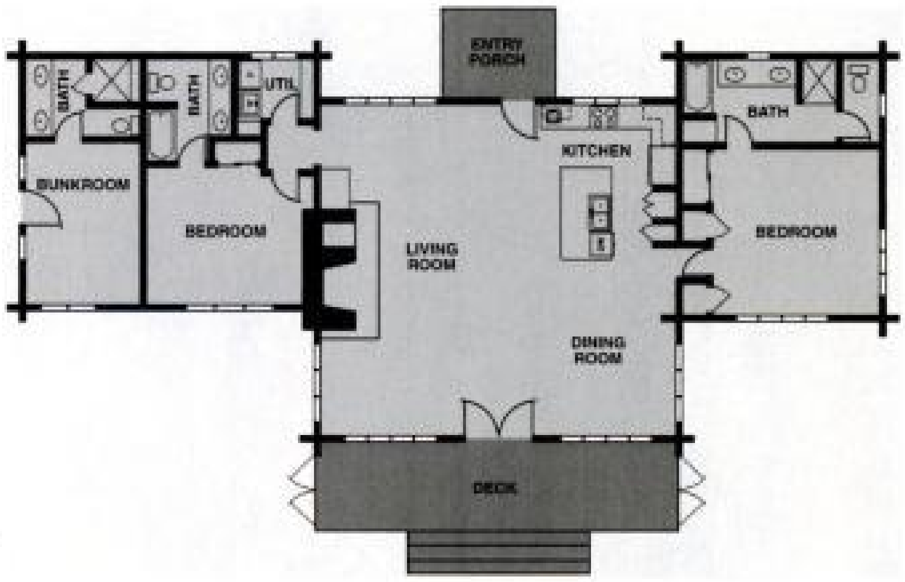
"It's called a cowboy porch," Jarvis says. "They're on all the old Western cabins. It's just a single pitch, but it's a different pitch from the house roof. Because of the pitch, the beams don't obsruct the view of the lake."

It'd be a shame if they did.

"As a builder, you spend time on numerous locations," Roessmann says. "This one, I certainly enjoyed the ambiance as much as anything. It was so quiet and peaceful. I wouldn't do the work I do for free, but that's as close to it as I've ever come because it was such a pleasant environment."

The Kremer Residence Floor Plan

Courtesy The Jarvis Group Architects



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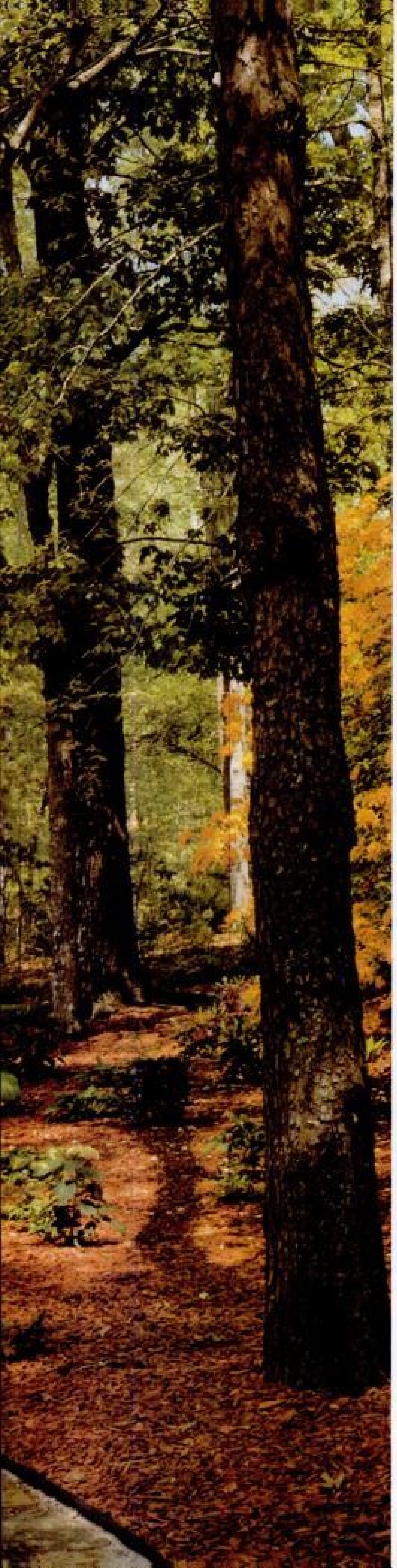

A Family Affair

Taking advantage of family resources, a Georgia couple builds a lakeside vacation home inviting to both friends and relatives

A pathway of dry-laid Tennessee fieldstone (left) meanders through native white pines, rhododendron and wild azalea as it leads up from the lakefront to Jim and Cheryle Dupont's log retreat. Herbs planted between the stones scent the air when crushed underfoot. Enclosed with custom-made white pine rails from the family log-products business and furnished with a swing, chair and loveseat crafted by Cheryle's father and son, the sprawling porch (above) is an inviting place to hang out.

BY ANDREW WORMER • PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE

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"Families that play together stay together," says Cheryle Dupont as she explains how she, her husband Jim and their three children came to build a vacation home on Georgia's pristine Blue Ridge Lake. With swimming, wakeboarding and tubing literally a stone's throw from the front porch, there's a lot of playing to be had by the Dupont's three lucky teenagers and their friends.

But Cheryle's definition of "family" is all-inclusive, so aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents are all welcome at the modestly-sized log home as well.

"We never know who is going to show up," Cheryle says with a laugh. "Most of our relatives live nearby and they know that we have an open house policy. The five of us can arrive at the lake on a Friday evening and the next evening there might be 20 for dinner."

A Home Not Far From Home

Blue Ridge Lake is only a 20-minute drive from the Dupont's year-round home in Blue Ridge, a small community located north of Atlanta near the Tennessee border. And while you might think a vacation home should offer more of a getaway, Cheryle explains that there are definite advantages in having a second home situated so close to a primary residence.

"We considered other lakes that were much farther away, but none of them were as clean or as clear as this one. And we can just pick up and go on a moment's notice, whether for an afternoon, a weekend, or a month at a time."

The family also had ties to the area, and knew the lake could provide all the recreational opportunities they enjoyed.

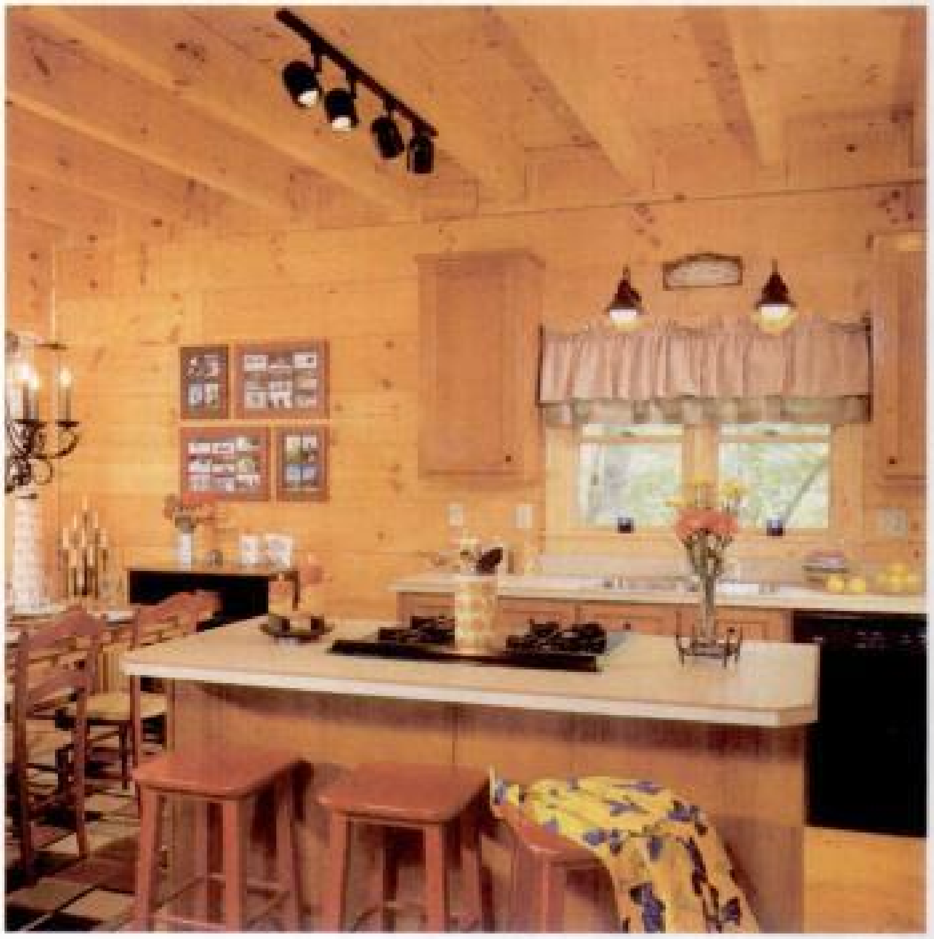
"We owned a boat first, which we kept at a marina there, so we already knew the lake pretty well," Cheryle says. "The problem was that there were always more people who wanted to go in the boat than we had room for."

So when the Duponts found a half-acre lot on the lake, a Tennessee Valley Authority reservoir with about 200 miles of shoreline (75% of which is undeveloped Chattahoochee National Forest land), it made sense to take the plunge into second home ownership.

All In The Family

Building a log home wasn't exactly a leap into uncharted waters. Cheryle's father and mother started a part-time business building vacation log homes in the area back in 1968, which eventually morphed into a company that now employs 60. Besides building log homes, the company today manufacturers log products and packages and develops real estate.

Here's where Cheryle and her sisters got their start —



Directly adjacent to the kitchen, the dining area (top) has an easy informality perfect for family gatherings. Custom cherry kitchen cabinetry provides a nice contrast to the dominant white pine woodwork found on the home's floors, walls and ceilings (above). An economical choice in this cost-conscious vacation home, the plastic-laminate countertops have a slightly textured surface that cleans up easily.

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While the home is heated (and cooled) with a central forced-air system, it gets its ambience from a wood-burning fireplace insert which is surrounded by a Tennessee fieldstone chimney.

"We were raised in the business and I've pretty much done every job in the company that there is to do," she notes — and where they returned after graduation from college and marriage. Her parents remain active in the business, as do Cheryle's sisters and brothers-in-law, along with a few third-generation family members. Cheryle's husband Jim manages the construction and millwork businesses while Cheryle, an accounting major in college, manages the company's financial affairs.

While Cheryle's sister does most of the company's architectural design work, the design for this home — the second log home built by the Duponts — came from Cheryle herself. "My husband and I have a perfect relationship in that regard; he gives me free rein in designing and planning, and just looks for potential problems," she says.

Besides keeping the home affordable, Cheryle and Jim wanted extra sleeping space for the many overnight guests they knew they would have, yet they wanted privacy for themselves. Their solution: a 1,456 square foot house with a flexible floor plan that includes an upper level with a master bedroom and a large loft that doubles as overflow sleeping space, a main level with a large bedroom and public living

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Though the home has a little over 1,400 square feet of living space, it feels much larger thanks to the open floor plan that combines the kitchen, dining and living areas. The interior woodwork is finished with four coats of semi-gloss polyurethane, which gives the wood a warm, easy-to-clean sheen.

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When guests come to visit, the girls congregate in the main floor bedroom (top), which is decorated with a rustic moose portrait painted and framed by a family friend. Perfect for informal gatherings, the large upstairs loft (above) has over 200 square feet of floor space and can easily accommodate three or four overnight guests on a couple of twin beds and a daybed.

areas, and a walkout basement with its own bathroom designed to eventually serve as another large bedroom and a den.

With almost full-height exposure on three sides, the walk-out basement has plenty of natural light, and even in its unfinished state is an attractive "hide-away" for teenagers. Up in their top level bedroom, Jim and Cheryle can do a little hiding out of their own as they enjoy the view out over the lake.

For Family Gatherings, With Family Resources

Though the home is relatively small, combining the kitchen, living and dining areas into one open space with a vaulted ceiling gives it the illusion of being much larger than it actually is, making it perfect for large family gatherings.

Like many other homes built by the family business, the home is constructed with 6x12 milled white pine logs chamfered on the edges (which creates a V-groove profile on both the interior and exterior) with dovetailed corners. Floors and ceilings are framed with 4x10 white pine timbers and decked with white pine boards, giving the interior a uniform appearance. Interior surfaces are finished with a semi-gloss polyurethane, making them both durable and easily cleaned, while the exterior is stained with a UV-blocking clear coat that also helps prevent mold and mildew from forming in the hot, humid climate.

The heart of this vacation home is the 10'x32' upper level porch that overlooks the lake. "This is my favorite part of the whole house," Cheryle exclaims. "This is where we spend most of our time when we're not cooking, sleeping or out on the water." Supported by lathe-cut 10" white pine posts and enclosed by a matching rail system (all supplied by the family millworks, of course), the porch is unscreened.

"Bugs aren't too much of a problem up on that upper level," Cheryle explains, "and we didn't want screens that would block the views. A few citronella candles seem to handle the strays that manage to find their way upstairs."

Besides elevating the porch above bug level, the home's three-floor design — two living levels and the walkout basement, which is conventionally framed but sided with pine log siding — takes optimal advantage of a compact 26'x32' footprint.

"On the one hand, I don't much like stairs and really prefer the single-level living that a ranch home offers," notes Cheryl, who points out that their primary residence is a ranch-style log home. "But a sprawling home just wouldn't have worked on this size of lot."

By building upward instead of side-to-side, the Duponts were able to maximize the small footprint's living area while retaining many of the lot's trees, which add to the home's

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The master bedroom is located on the upper level for privacy and features views looking out over nearby Blue Ridge Lake. Along with several other pieces of furniture found in the home, the bed and table were handcrafted by Jim and Cheryle Dupont's 15 year-old son Christopher and his grandfather.

privacy. And a simple landscape plan featuring low-maintenance native plantings like rhododendron and lilies and minimal lawn means more playtime.

"Our home is the perfect size," says Cheryle. "If it was too big, we'd just spend all of our time taking care of it."

Eventually, Jim and Cheryle plan to complete the planned basement bedroom and den, the one piece of unfinished business that remains. For now, though, the basement remains bare except for the bathroom, but that doesn't stop friends and cousins from congregating there with their sleeping bags and video games. But as Jim has pointed out to Cheryle, a concrete floor is hard to stain no matter what gets spilled on it, and logs are a whole lot more durable than drywall. So even when family gatherings turn a little raucous, there's little need to worry. And that seems to be a small price to pay for the peace of mind that comes with knowing exactly where your children and their friends are.

Andrew Wormer is a contributing editor with Fine Homebuilding *magazine and the author of* The Bathroom Idea Book *and* The Builder's Book of Bathrooms *(Taunton Press).*

During the long, hot Georgia summer, family life centers around crystal-clear Blue Ridge Lake – seen here from the upper porch – which has 200 miles of shoreline and is virtually surrounded by the Chattahoochee National Forest.

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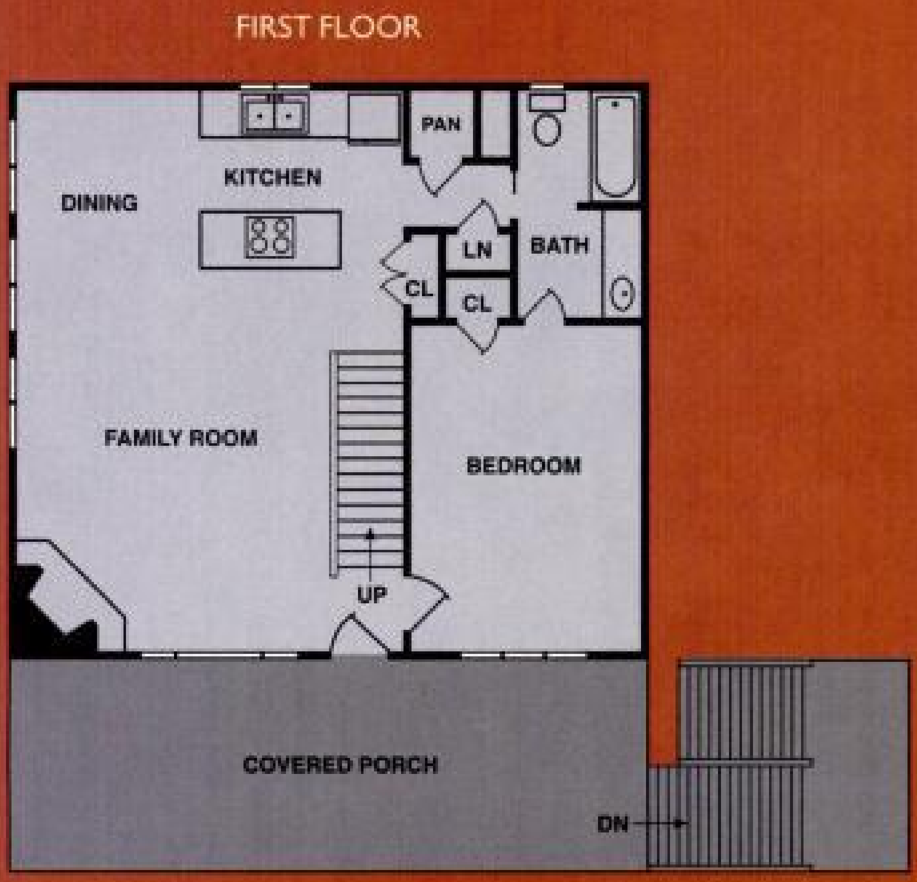
The home's 26'x32' compact footprint takes best advantage of the small half-acre lot, while the simple landscaping plan featuring native plantings minimizes maintenance, leaving more time for tubing and wakeboarding out on the lake.

The Dupont Residence Floor Plan

Courtesy The Sisson Company



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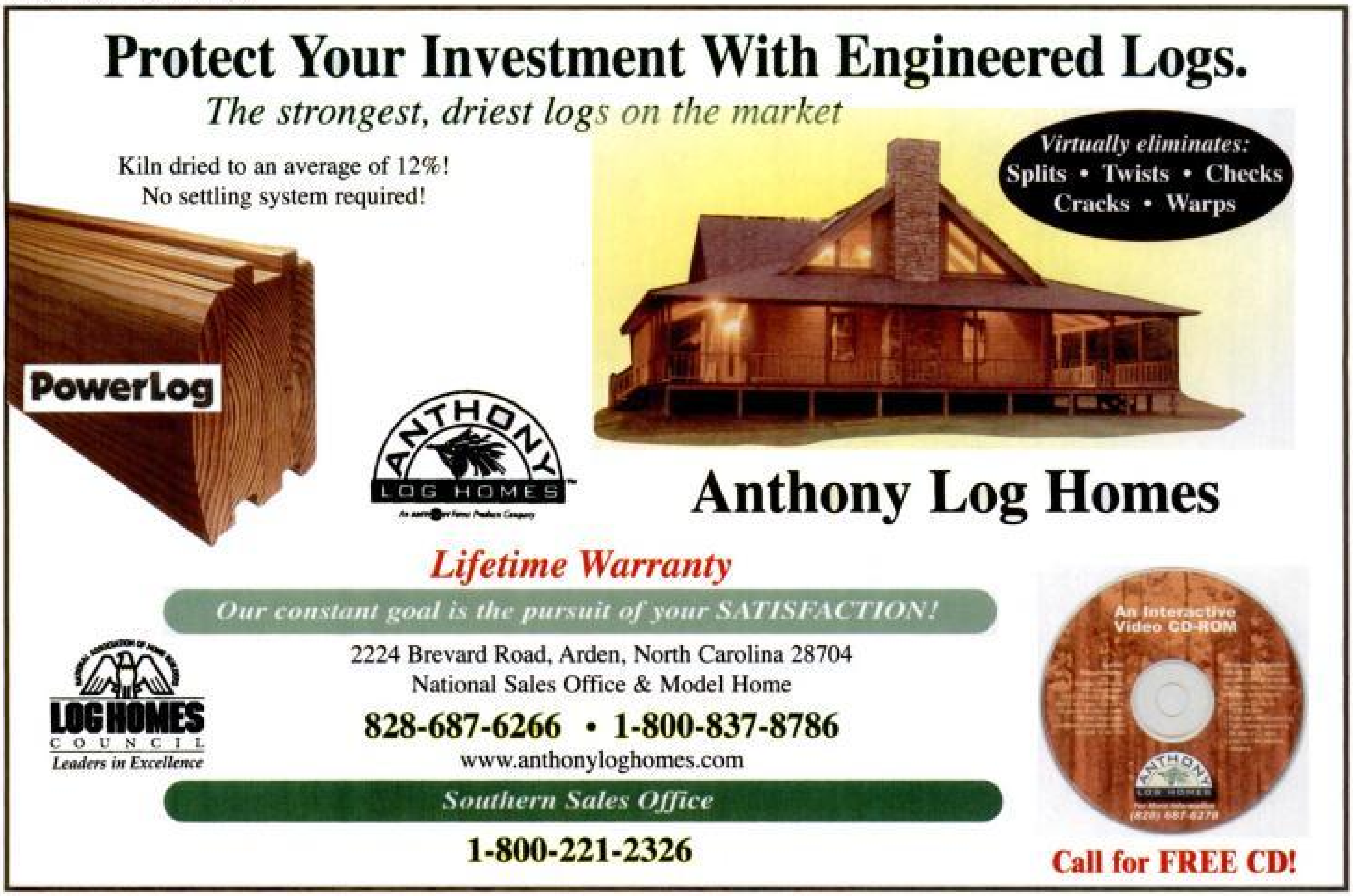

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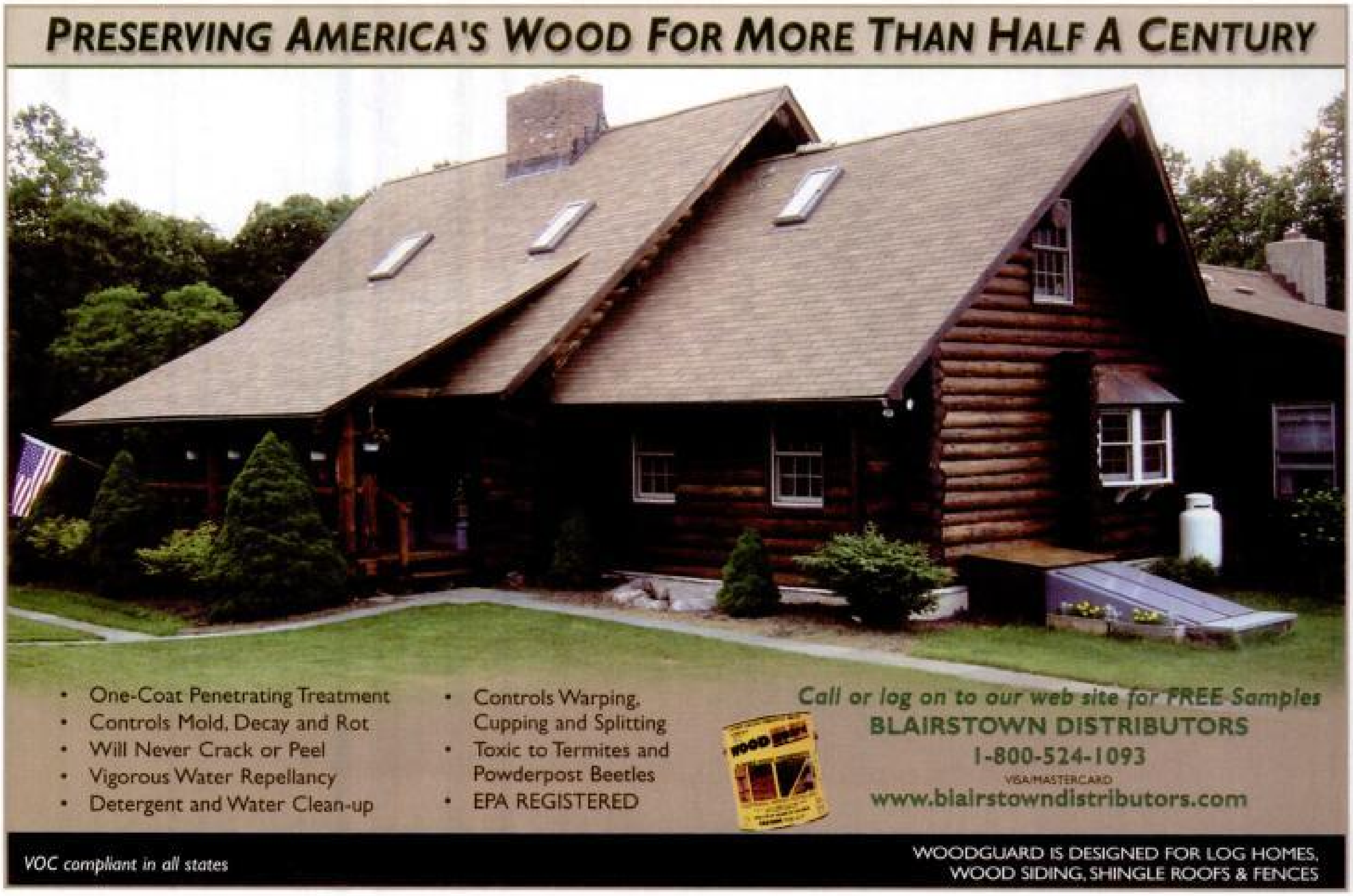

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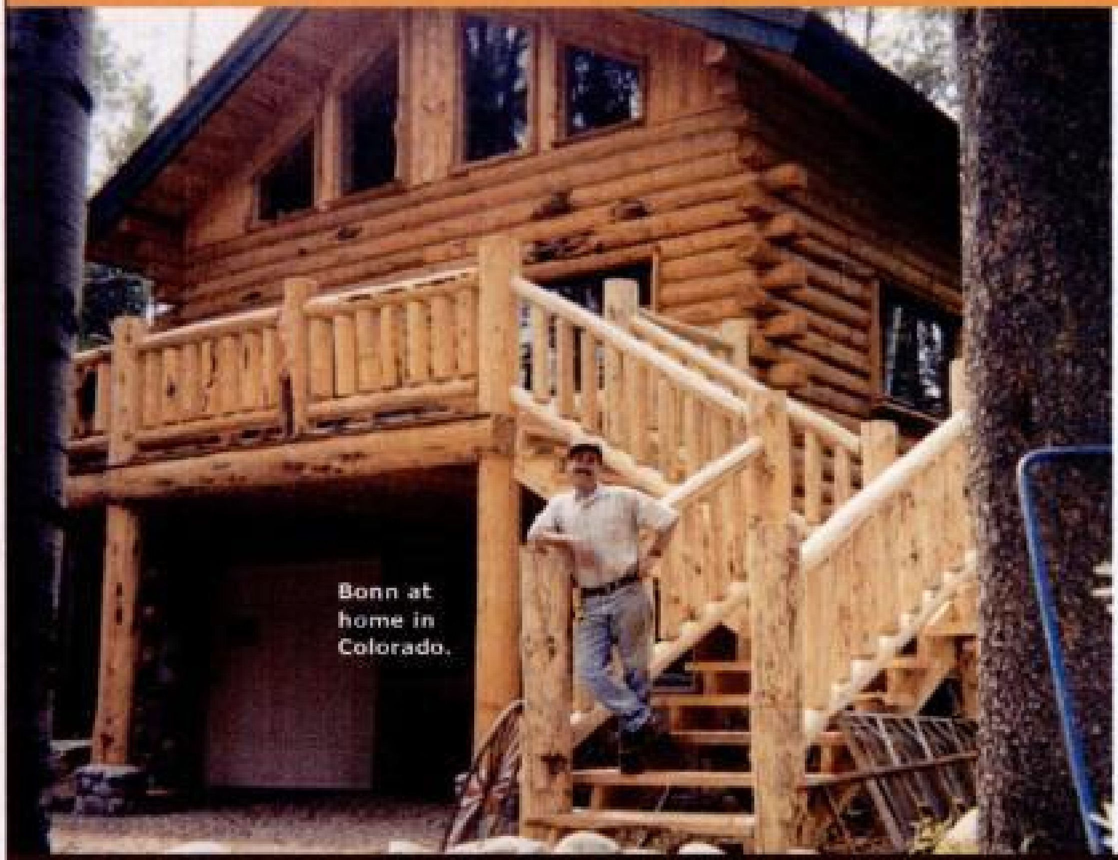
QUIT DREAMING...



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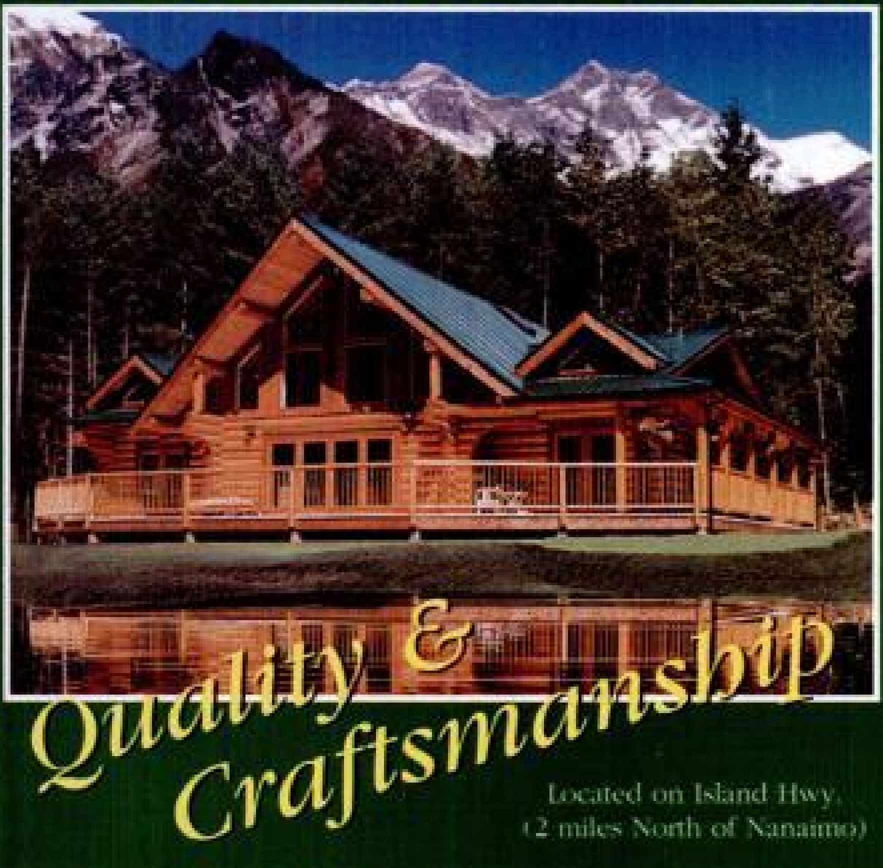

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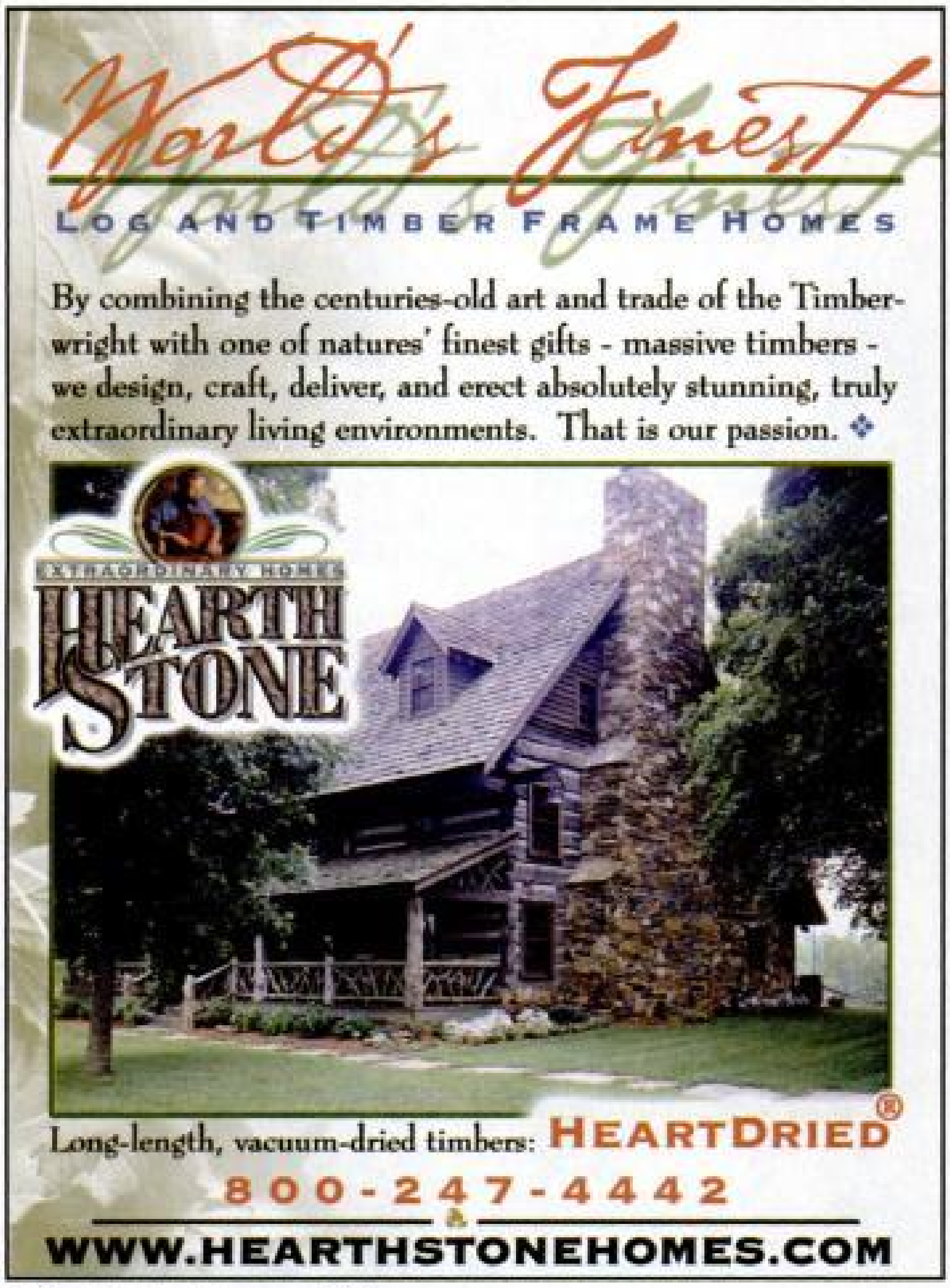

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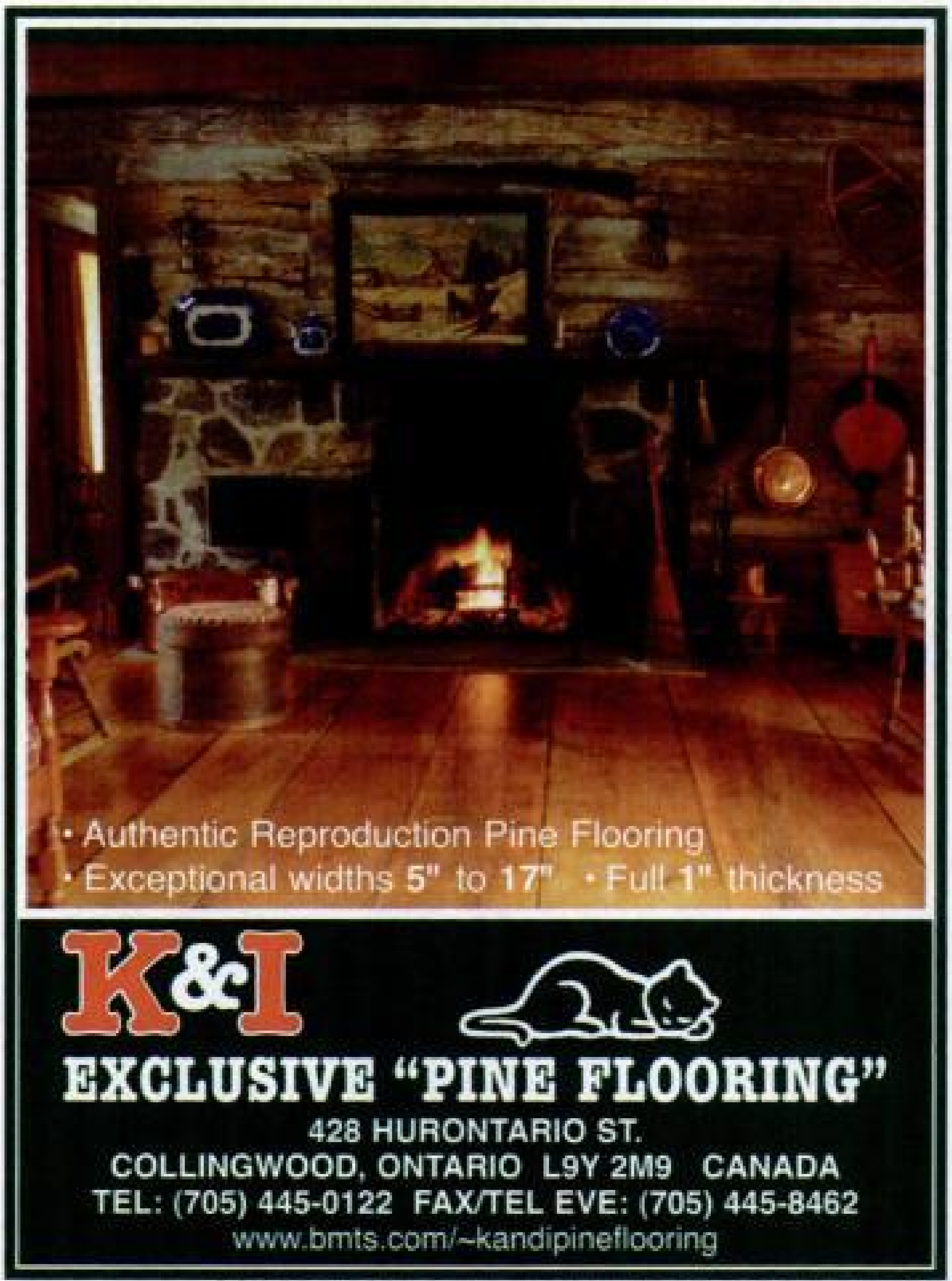

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Art of the Home

An entire section devoted to furnishings and accessories for your log home

Photo Courtesy Stone Manor Lighting

A garden is more than a spot to grow. With the right lighting and furniture you can create your own little backyard Garden of Eden. This section features artists dedicated to enhancing the natural beauty of your outdoor spaces.

green thumb gear

furnishings & accessories for your garden

Profiles by Jay Uhlenbrauck • All photos shown in Art of the Home appear courtesy of the artists/companies featured unless otherwise indicated.

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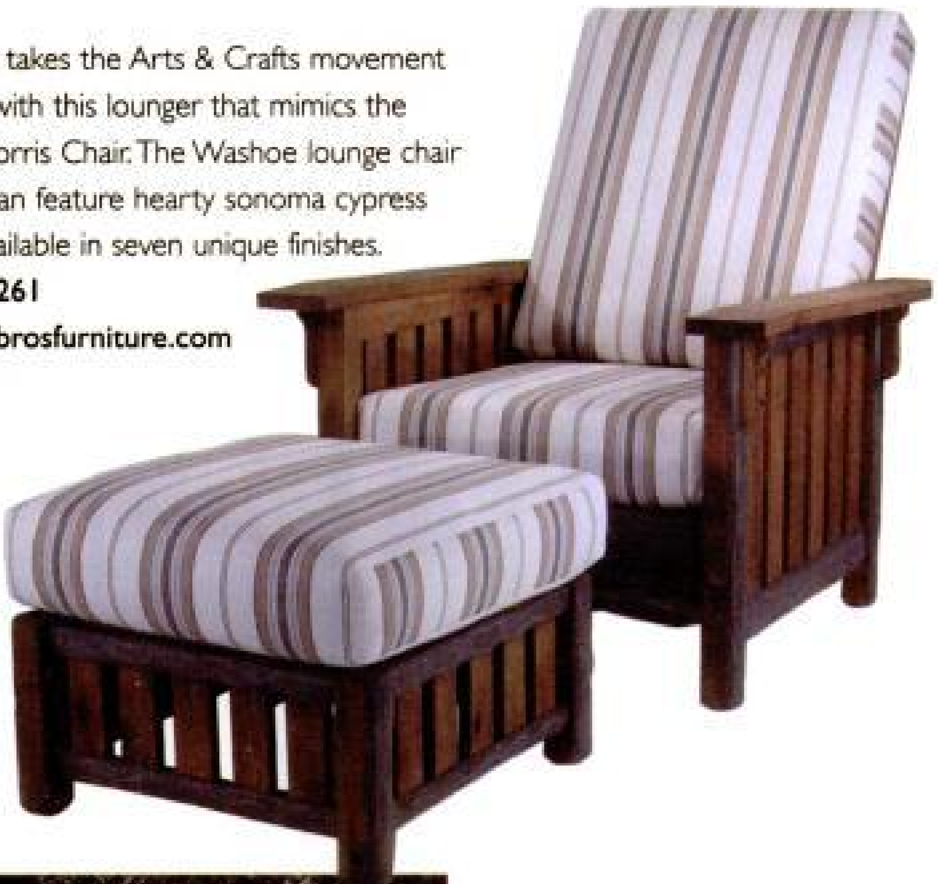

At nearly 6 feet tall, this sculpted sundial from IronWork.com soars over garden spaces. Metal artist Dean Curfman works bronze stripes into steel for a rippled effect that's perfect for "catchin' the rays."

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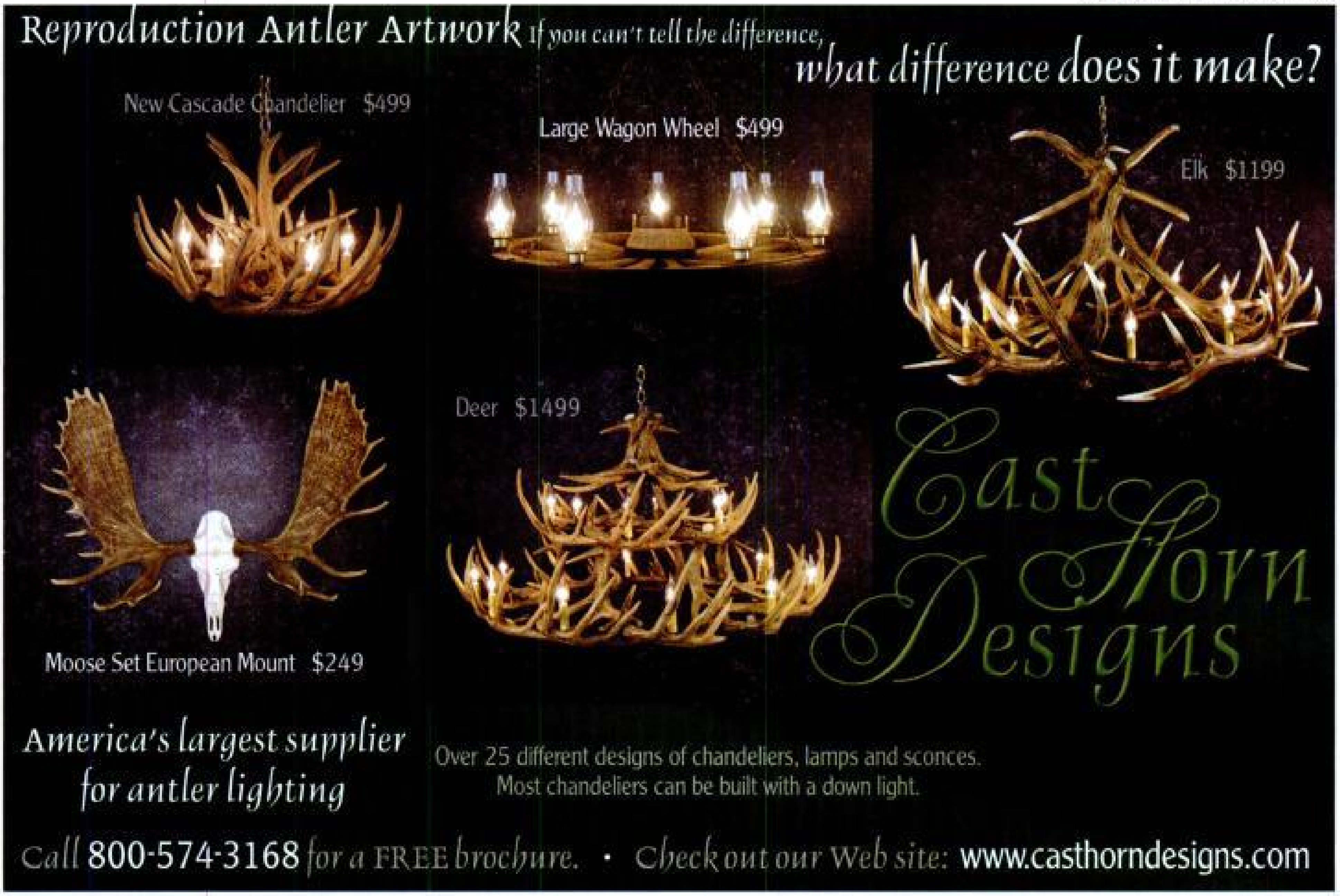

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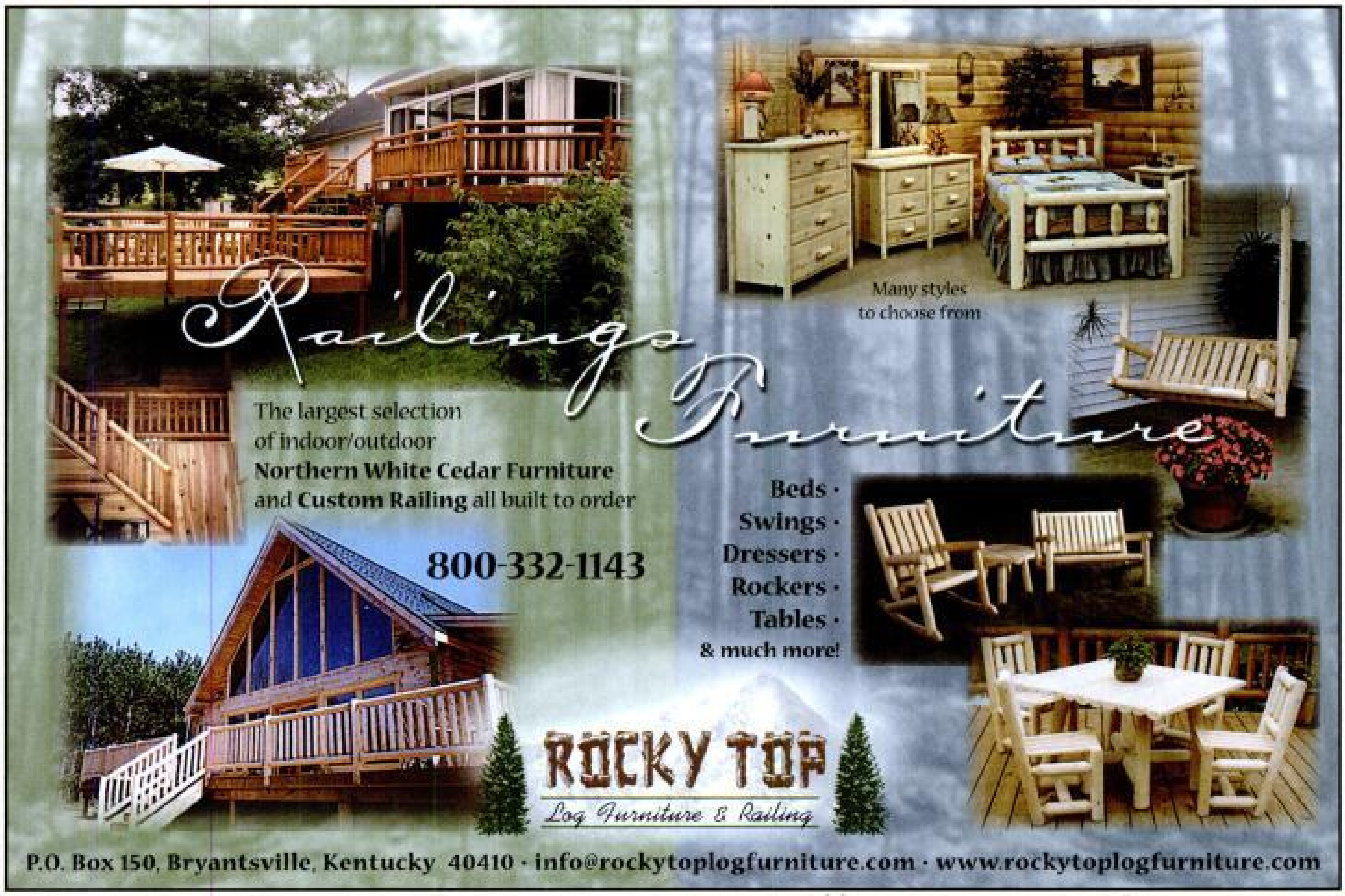

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RUSTIC PURR-FECTION

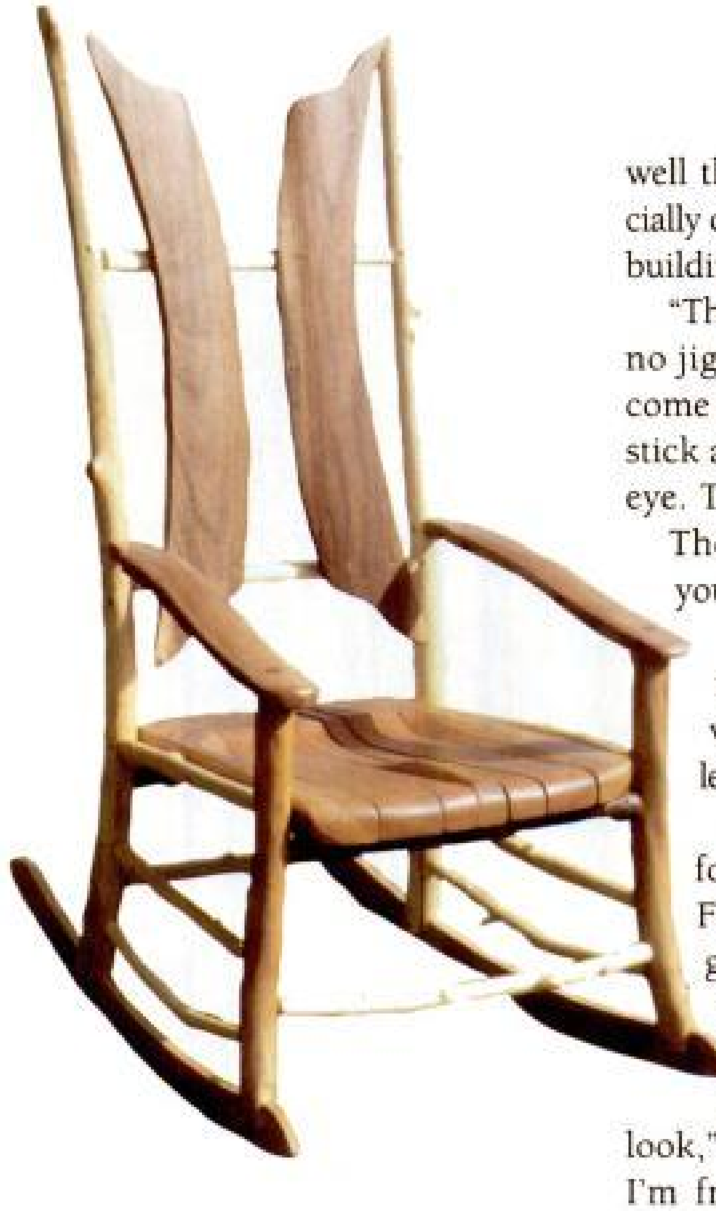
Ray Smith knows what it's like to work for finicky customers. He started his woodworking career building amusement devices for cats.

"My wife Annie wanted me to make an environmentally friendly cat tree," he explains. So he rounded up some wood and got to work, but after seeing the first one, Annie sent him back to the drawing board.

"I built it with screws," Ray says. "Annie didn't like it because it had synthetic materials." So he bought a book on rustic furniture design and learned how to do mortise and tenon joinery.

Annie loved the 100 percent biodegradable cat tree so much, she insisted Ray build more and sell them. Over the next several months, Ray built several cat trees, along with some rustic furniture and brought them to local cat shows. He was pleasantly surprised how well the rustic furniture sold — especially considering how much he enjoyed building it.

Once Ray Smith perfected the joinery for his rustic furniture, the next step was to build in comfort. "It's hard to make wood comfortable," he says. "I saw other rustic furniture and it looked pretty, but if you can't sit in it, what good is it?" Ray's solution was contoured seats and backs.



"There are no plans, no right angles, no jigs," Ray says. "The branches all come in at odd angles. You move the stick and drill the holes. It's all hand-eye. To me, it's just natural."

The style fits in with Ray's do-it-yourself personality.

"I love fixing and troubleshooting," he says. "It lends itself to woodworking. You're always problem solving."

All of the furniture Ray builds for his company Natural Tree Furniture falls under the category "rustic" and he wouldn't have it any other way.

"If I built Victorian furniture, I'd be judged by how it should look," he says. "With rustic furniture, I'm free to build whatever I want. There are no rules."

Ray uses elm for many of his pieces, but he had a breakthrough when he discovered Osage Orange.

"I was looking for an outdoor wood," Ray says. "Miles of Osage Orange trees were planted in Kansas as a windbreaker during the dust bowl era of the 1930s. They used it for fence posts [all over Kansas] and the posts have been around for 80 years."

He uses mostly deadstanding wood, which he kiln-dries for three days to sterilize it. Next he wire brushes the wood to bring out its natural beauty.

"The texture is beautiful once you get down to the wood," he says. "It polishes like glass. It's beautiful."

To contact Ray & Annie Smith at Natural Tree Furniture, call 785-658-2618 or visit www.smithindustries.com.

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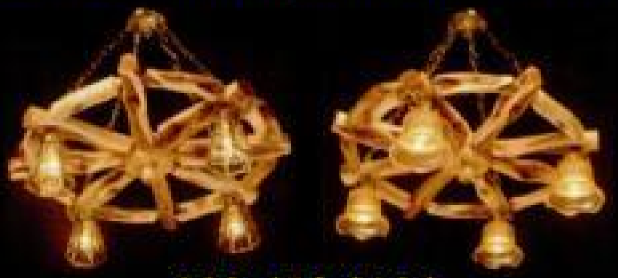

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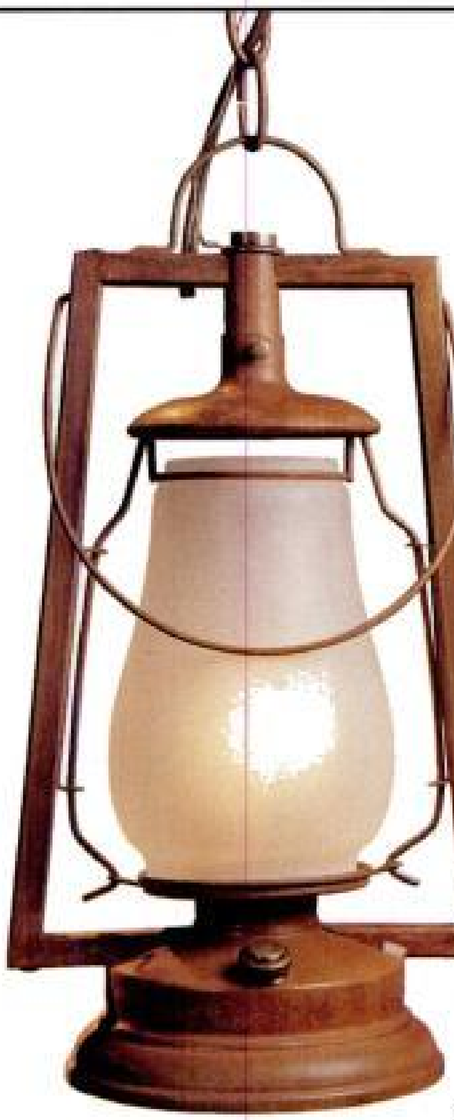

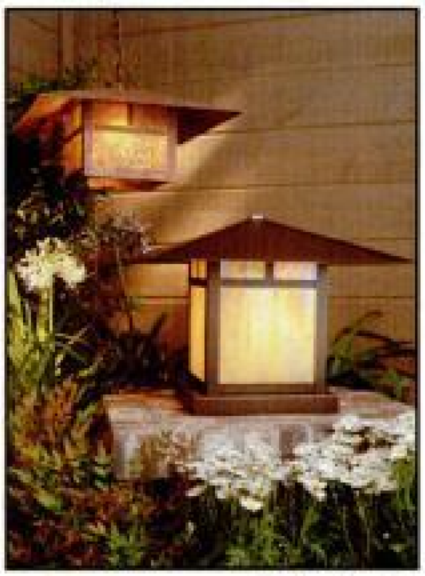

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SEEING THE LIGHT

Lance Lindsay is changing the way people think about garden lighting.

"The old rule of thumb was you weren't supposed to see the light source," he says. "[Garden lights] were industrial looking tubes. Instead of lighting garden art, I make the light itself a work of art."

With 12 years of film directing under his belt, Lance knows the importance of good lighting.

"I'm trying to set a mood," he says. "It's very much like a movie set. You can take a junky stage and if you light it right it looks like a million bucks."

Lance didn't set out to start a business. He just wanted to light the three acres of gardens, waterfalls and 1,500 feet of stone fence outside his English tudor house. Following a celebrity wedding on his property, the location became a hot spot for such events.

"I decided I needed more lighting," Lance says. "I bought the most expensive outdoor lights I could find and they faded within six months." So Lance did extensive research and created outdoor lighting that met his high standards — and the requests started pouring in.

"I just made them for my home," he says. "But people kept asking where they could get some."

Lance took the hint and started Stone Manor Lighting six years ago. Now, he offers dozens of design options and ships his outdoor art lights all over the country. Color and appearance are extremely important, but at the top of his list is quality.

He uses bronze and copper because they patina without rusting. Sockets are custom made from porcelain, stainless steel, silver or brass so they won't rust or crack. He even uses artisan-grade glass that won't crack or fade.

"Parts of the country have snow and some are really hot," he says. "I had to make my lights to withstand a snow drift and desert heat. They're very hearty. If you kick one, you'll probably hurt your toe."

All the parts are replaceable, so even if something breaks customers can order a part and not have to replace the whole light.

After six years in the business, Lance is happy where he's at, but there's always room for improvement.

"The lights are constantly being redesigned," he says. "I'm always trying to make them stronger, better looking, more functional and cheaper. I'm always juggling those four things."

To contact Lance Lindsay at Stone Manor Lighting, call 888-534-0544 or visit www.stonemanorlighting.com.

Lance Lindsay enjoys building functional works of art for the garden. "What intrigues me about lighting is you have to make it work," he explains. "I like the functional art aspect." The Tulip Cluster (left) features hand-cut, oven-bent glass supported by heavy gauge solid copper. The Dragonfly garden light (below) is part of Lance's "Jewels of the Garden" series. It features a cast bronze body and artisan-grade glass.

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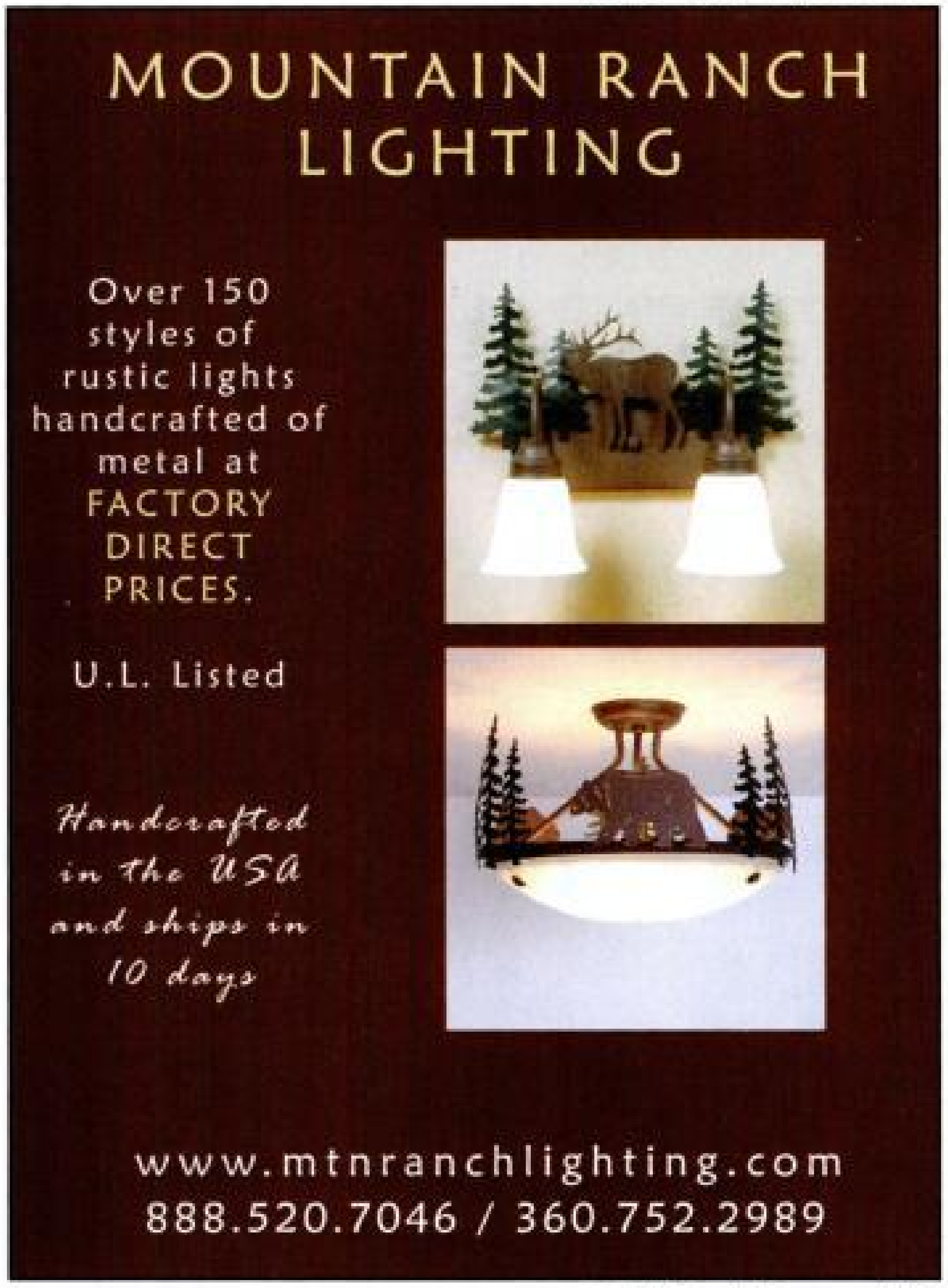

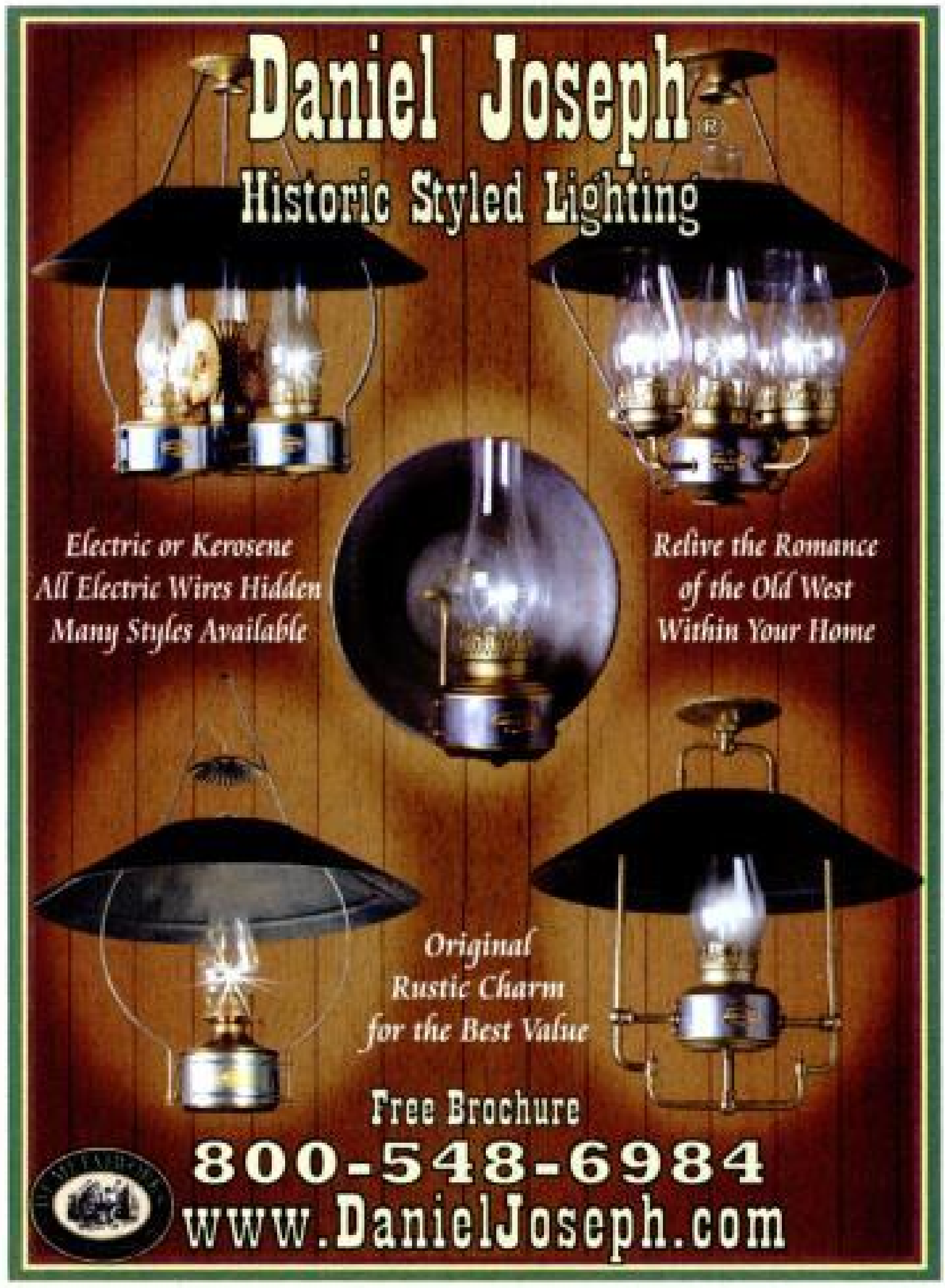

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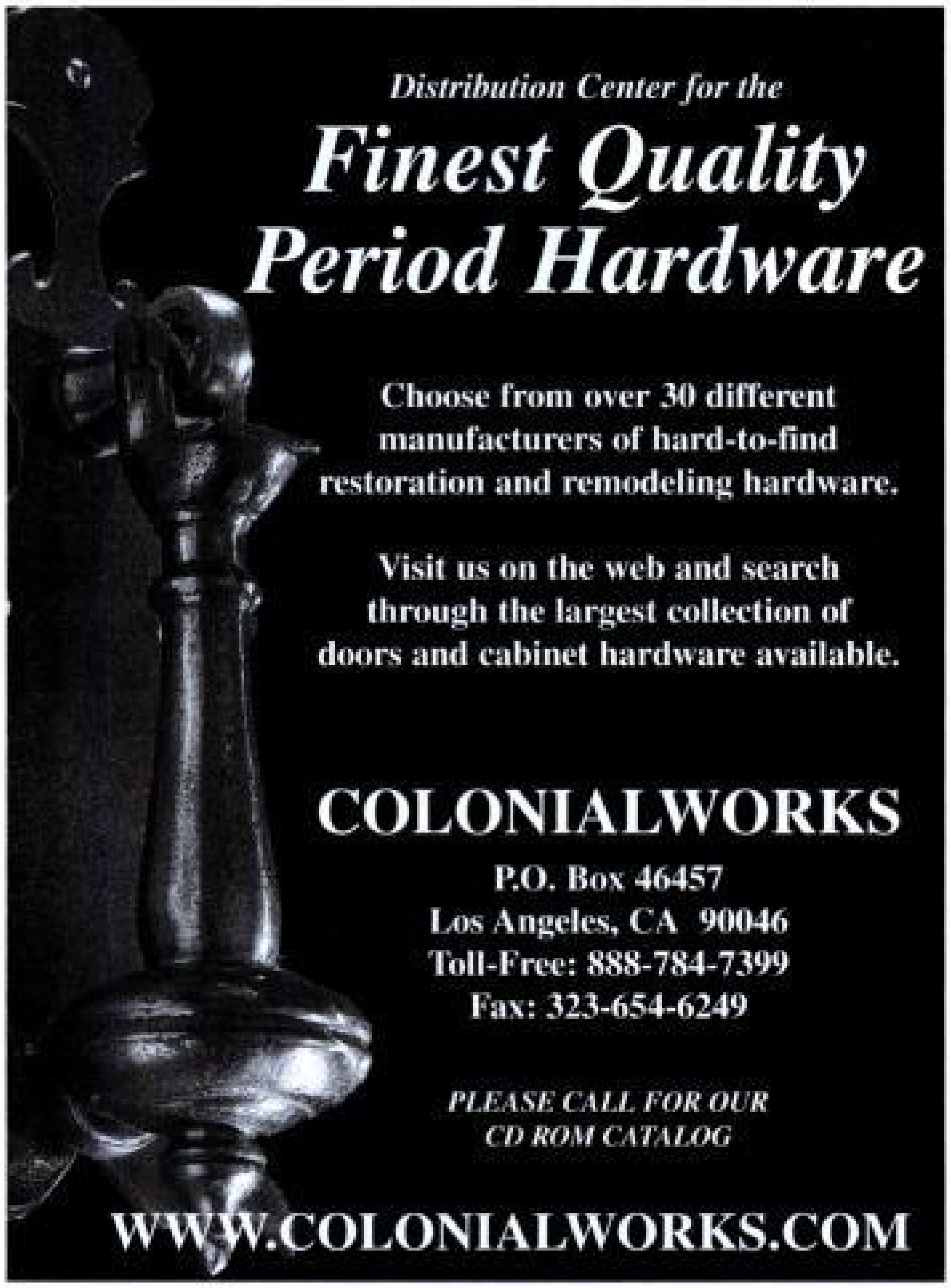

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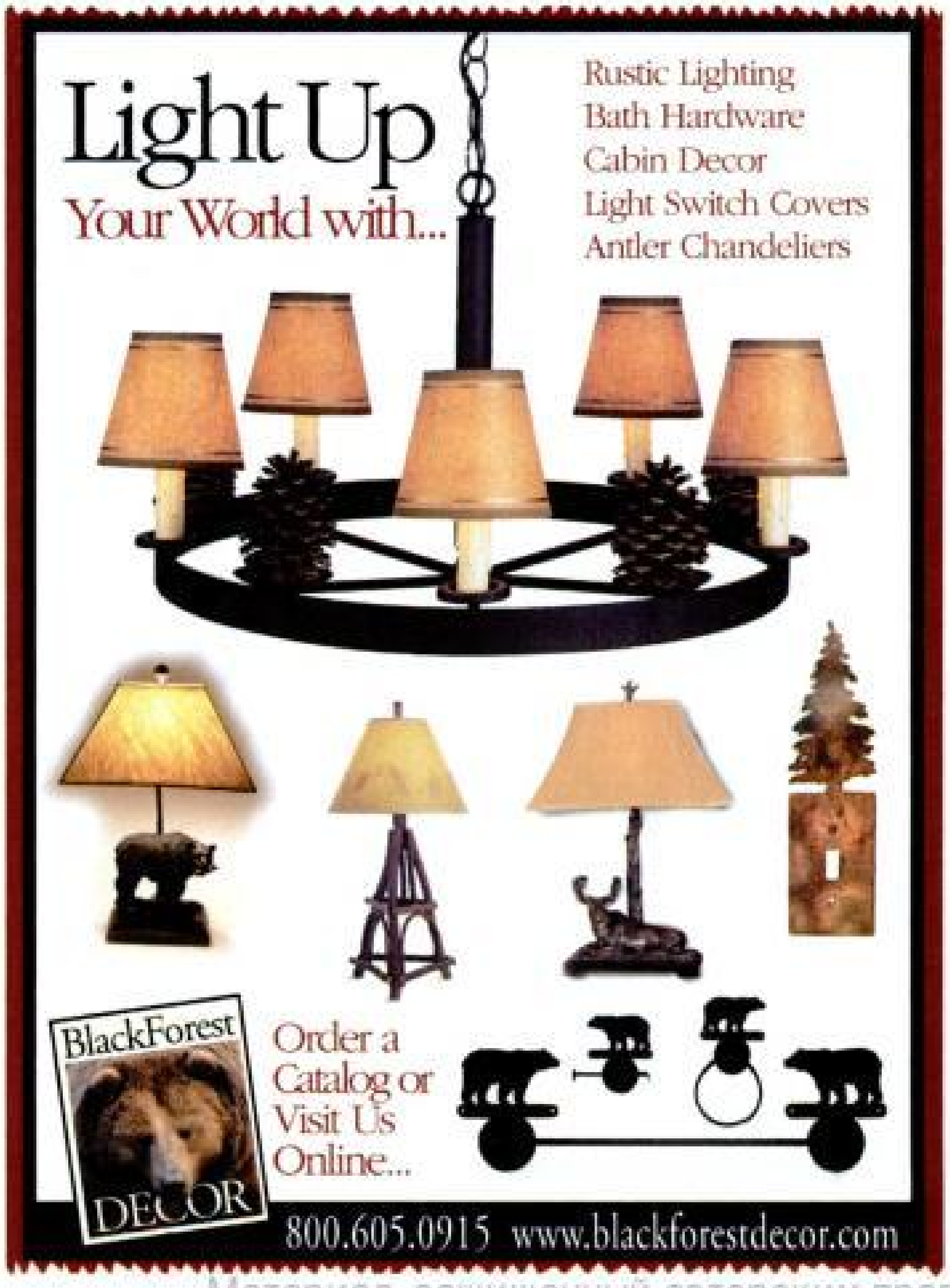

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OUT OF THE OFFICE

For John Lore, building rustic furniture started out as an excuse to quit his day job.

"I was ready to get out from behind a desk," he says. "I was sick of shuffling papers and wanted to do something with my hands."

Coming from a product design background, however, he wasn't just interested in making rustic furniture; he wanted to make it better.

"It has such a rich history, but it's not something that is really studied in design school," he says. "It's more of a folk art. I thought there was some good potential there."

Like most rustic furniture builders, John started out simple.

"You really only need a hammer and a saw," He says. "In its basic sense, it's cutting sticks and nailing them together." John tried to distance himself, however, from other rustic furniture makers by leaving the bark on.

"It would be easier to take the bark off, but I really like the more natural look and there weren't a lot of people doing it this way," he says.

John says the trick is to dry the wood immediately after it is harvested so the cambium layer beneath the bark doesn't deteriorate. He considers himself lucky to live in British Columbia, Canada.

"This is one of the best places in the world to get Western red cedar," he says. He uses it exclusively for his outdoor furniture because of its natural resistance to insects and rot.

John Lore uses Western red cedar limbs for his rustic outdoor furniture. "A tree that is only a couple inches in diameter would be less than 10 years old, where a limb that size could be 300 years old," he says. "The limbs are more dense because they are slower growing."

When John started Pickle Ridge Rustic Carpentry in 1993, he was primarily interested in building art pieces, but when hotels and fishing lodges showed interest his business sense kicked in.

"I started expanding in 1997," he says. "I hired some people and bought bigger equipment." But it was still important to John that he maintain the rustic, handmade look.

"I had to make it reproducible while keeping as many artistic indulgences as possible," he explains.

Now, even on his worst days, John is happy to go into work, as long as it doesn't involve too much paperwork.

"The best part is seeing something you created at the end of the day," he says. "It's much more rewarding than moving a stack of papers from one side of the desk to the other."

To contact John Lore at Pickle Ridge Rustic Carpentry, call 250-748-0763 or visit www.pickleridge.com.

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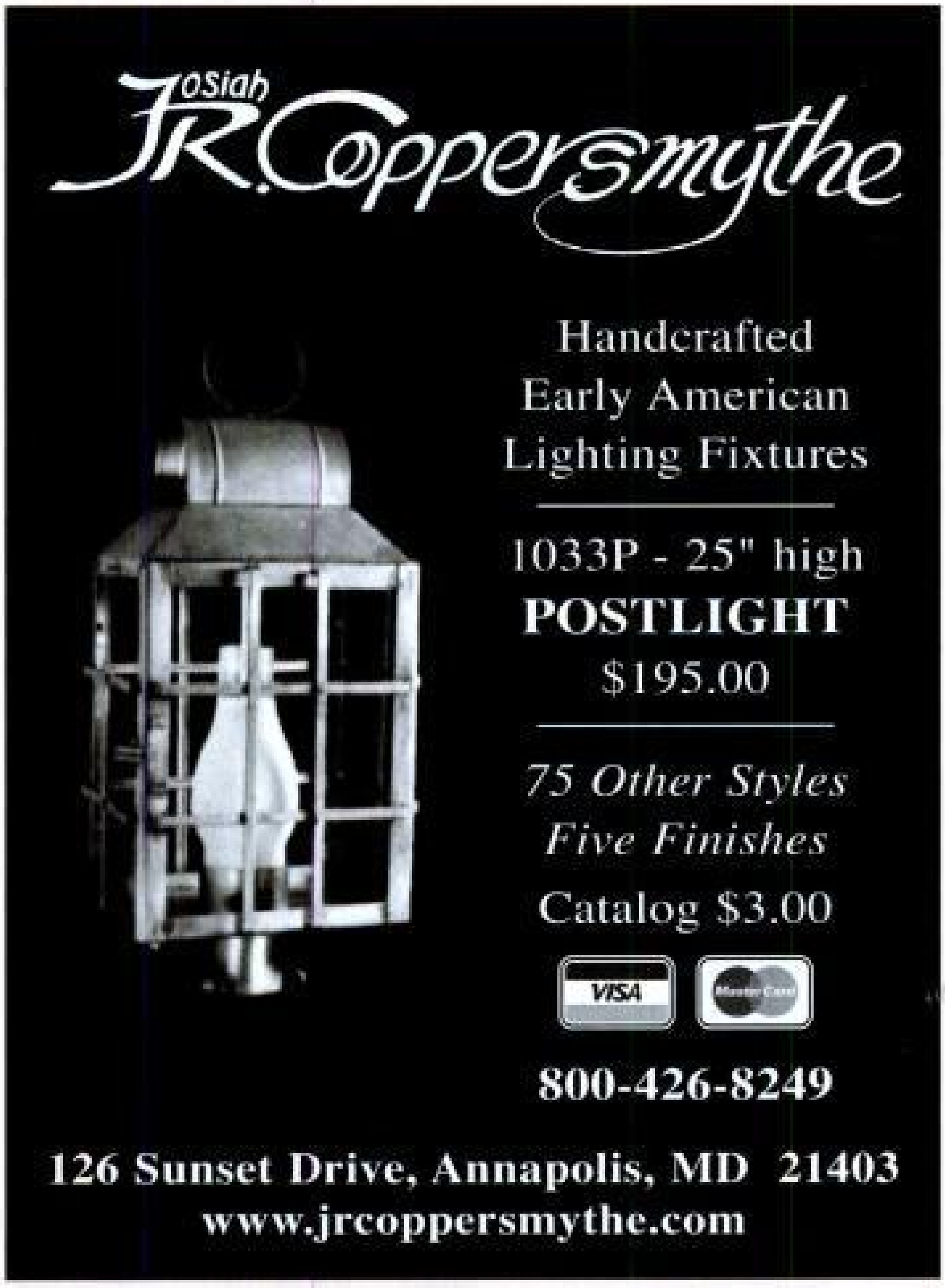
∇ Circle Reader Response #427



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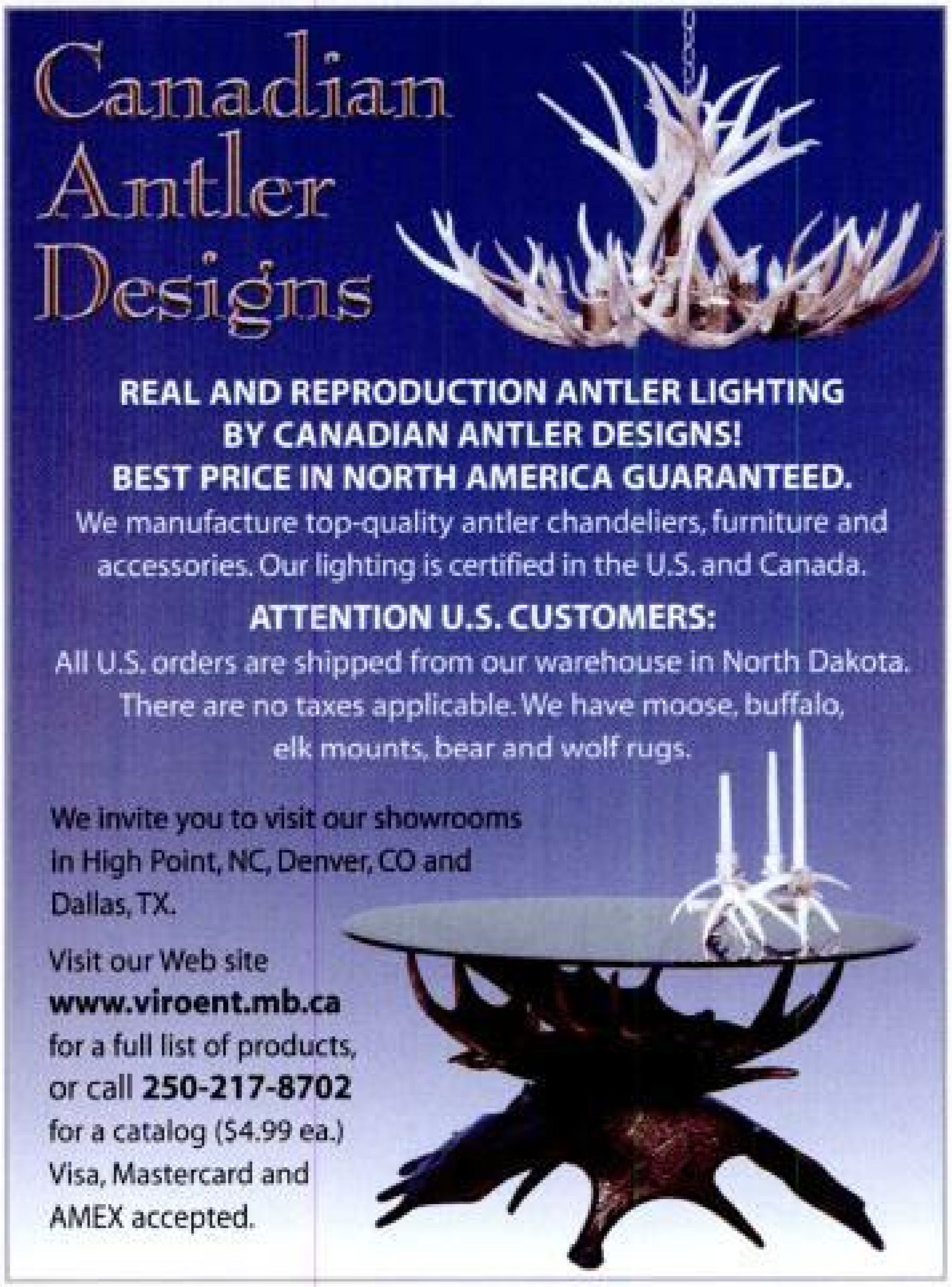

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

IT'S A LIVING

Darin Robinson primarily builds with Douglas fir and Western red cedar that he harvests himself. "I mostly just thin the woods," he says. "An acre can only support a certain amount of trees. Plus it's a fire hazard when it's too dense."

In 1996 an ice storm devastated the woods of the Pacific Northwest and Darin Robinson found a new calling.

"I started clearing the woods and cutting timber for a logging operation," he says. "I noticed so many of these little trees were being wasted. Anything under 5" diameter was junk for the log industry. They'd use it for pulp or chip it up."

So Darin harvested the smaller timber and sold it to furniture makers and log home companies that used it for railing. When his biggest buyer — a furniture company in Seattle — moved to Canada, Darin found himself with a lot of supply and not much demand.

"I had a shed full of wood that was just sitting there," he says. "So I started building furniture. It was just a hobby to use the logs I had." His first piece was a bunk bed for his daughter. It turned out fine, but Darin knew he could do better.

"I started doing research on tools for log building," he says. "Once I bought a tenon cutter, things really took off. It allowed me to try some more elaborate stuff." The appearance and strength of his furniture improved as mortise and tenon joinery replaced bolts. His goal was to make each piece better than the one before, while letting the wood be the focus.

"The biggest challenge was getting round logs to fit together," he says. "But I learned from each piece I built." After building an inventory, Darin took his furniture on the road.

"I did a bunch of shows and fairs at first," Darin says. "It was a good response. I got a lot of regular customers out of that."

Darin is always refining his work, but quality remains his primary focus.

"I try to overbuild my furniture," he says. "I like to put extra pieces in them to make them stronger — extra cross pieces on chairs, for example. I want this stuff to be around forever."

Darin strives to make original, artistic pieces, but when it comes down to it he's just trying to make a living. Besides some custom work for repeat customers, he hasn't changed his business model much from when he first began.

"I avoid too much marketing," Darin says. "I just build it, put it out there and hope it sells. I hope to get to the point where the phone is ringing off the hook and there are lots of satisfied customers."

To contact Darin Robinson at Lopaka Logs, call 360-427-7425 or visit http://darinlrobinson.tripod.com.

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ULTIMATE LIVING SPACES

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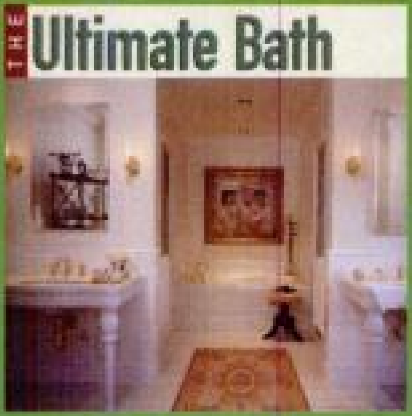

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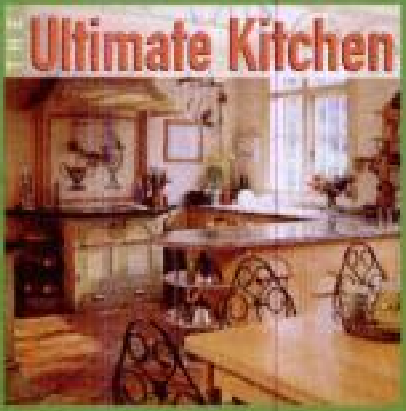

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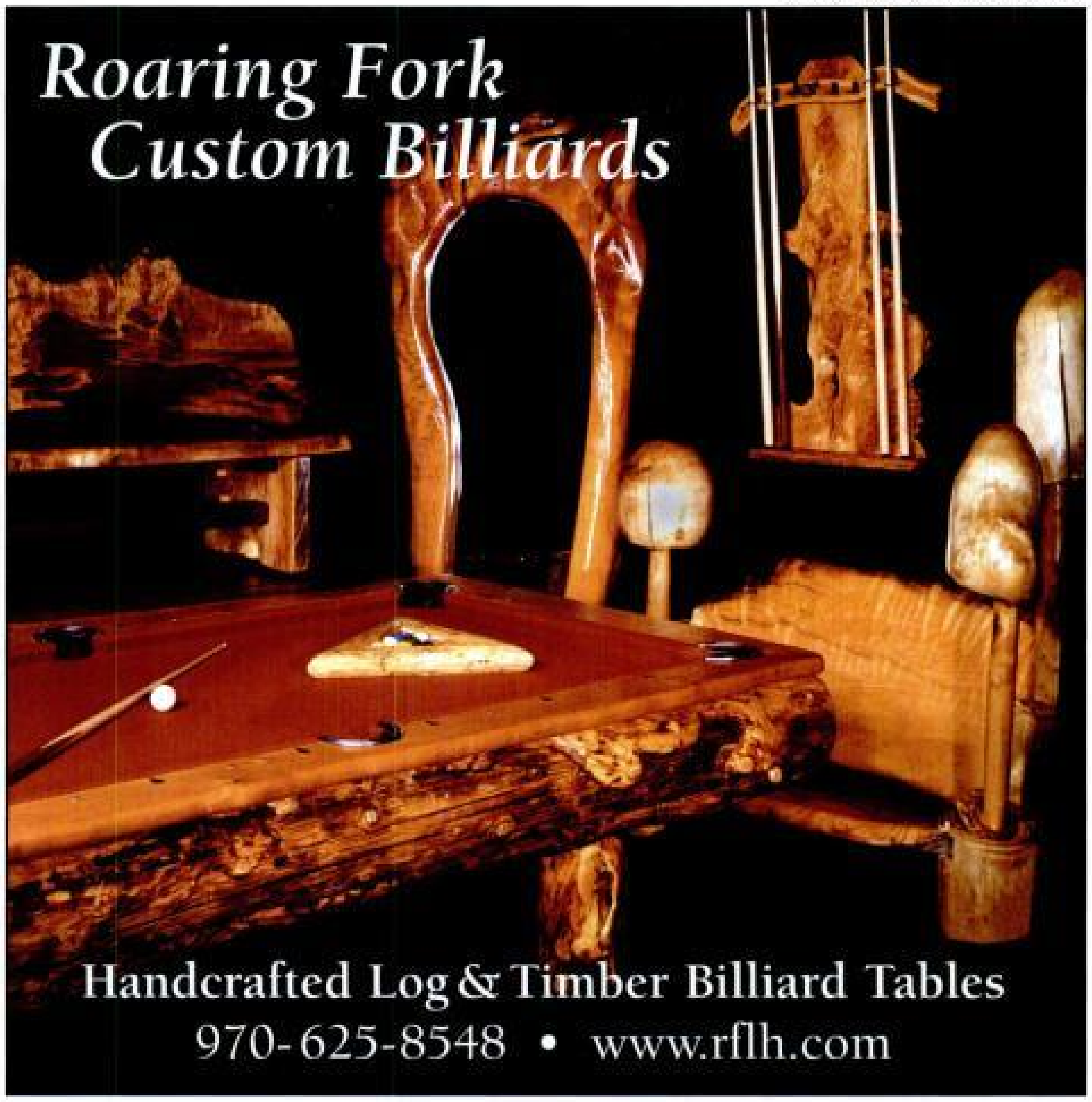

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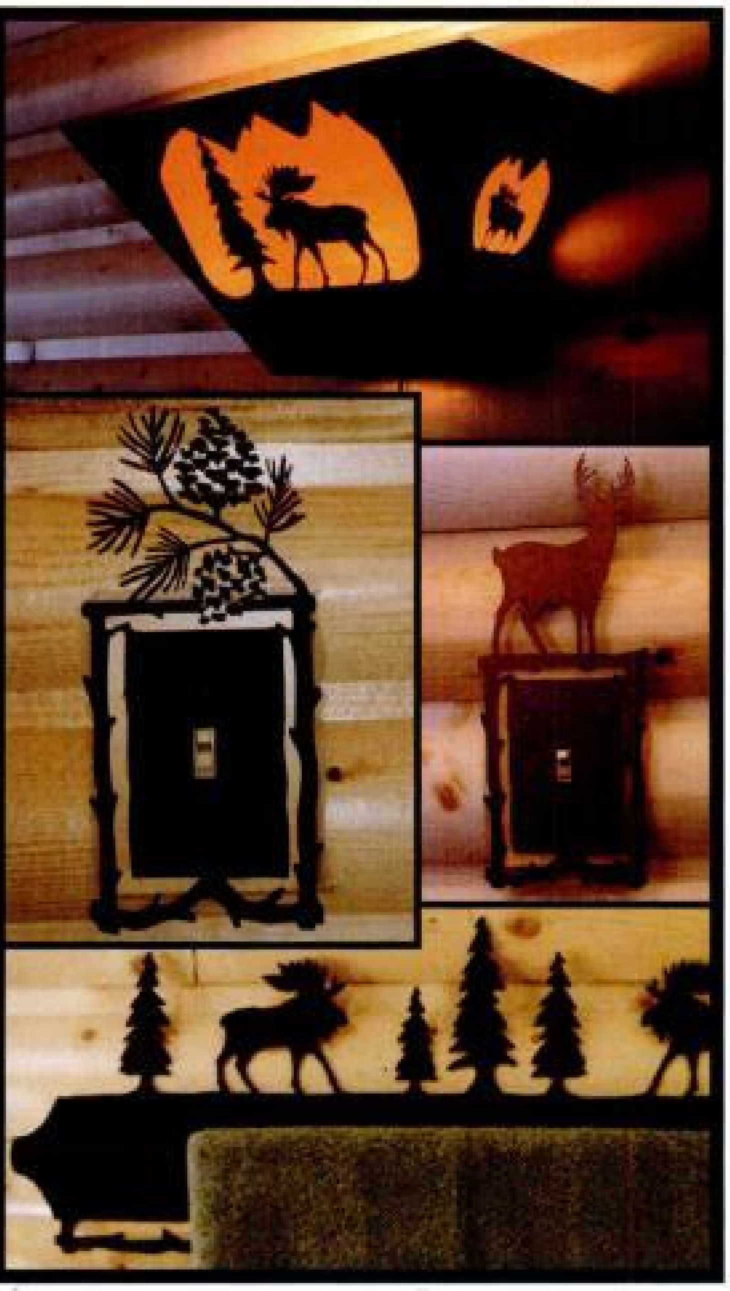

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WORKSHOP

New Bloomfield: July 16-17; August 20-21; Gastineau Log Homes. 573-896-5122.

MONTANA

OPEN HOUSES

Columbus: July 11; August 8; September 12; 1-4 p.m.; Mountain View Homes, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 406-322-8484.

NEBRASKA

OPEN HOUSES

Geneva: July 25; August 29; call for times; Custom Log Homes of Nebraska, LLC, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 877-332-8138.

Omaha: July 18; August 15; September 19; 1-4 p.m.; The Wilderness Co. 712-545-3540.

Pleasant Dale: July 9; August 13; September 3; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 402-761-2221.

LOG RAISINGS

Geneva: August 28-29; call for times; Custom Log Homes of Nebraska, LLC, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 877-332-8138.

SEMINARS

Geneva: July 25; August 29; call for times; Custom Log Homes of Nebraska, LLC, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 877-332-8138.

NEVADA

OPEN HOUSES

Las Vegas: July 3-4, 7-8; August 7-8; September 4-5; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 702-452-4476.

Virginia City: July 17, 31; August 14, 28; September 11, 25; call for appointment; Virginia City Real Log Homes. 775-847-4411.

WORKSHOPS

Las Vegas: July 15; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 702-452-4476.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

OPEN HOUSES

Bartlett: July 17; August 15; September 4; call for information; Heritage Log Homes of Mt. Washington Valley. 603-374-6188.

Gorham: Call for appointment; The Original Lincoln Logs, Ltd. 603-752-4101.

Hudson: July 10-11; August 7-8; September 11-12; Northern Log Homes, Inc. 877-923-1005.

NEW JERSEY

OPEN HOUSES

Clinton: August 14; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 908-637-8858.

Creamridge: July 18; August 15, 25; September 19; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 609-758-9484.

Flemington: July 18; September 12; Jersey Log Homes, authorized representative of Hiawatha Log Homes. 908-284-4986.

Florence: July 17; August 21; September 11; call for directions; Heritage Log Homes. 609-499-8980.

Franklinville: July 10; August 14; September 11; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 856-728-6467.

Great Meadows: July 17; September 18; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 908-637-8658.

Hardwick: Call for appointment; The Original Lincoln Logs, Ltd., 908-362-1177.

Howell: July 3; August 7; September 4; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 732-938-9090.

Knowlton: July 11; August 1; September 5; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 908-637-8658.

Newfield: Call for information; Northern Log Homes. 856-358-3753.

Newton: July 10; August 21; September 18; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 973-579-3936.

Newton: July 11; August 8; 1-4 p.m.; Greendell Real Log Homes, LLC. 908-684-9083.

NEW MEXICO

OPEN HOUSES

Alto: Call for appointment.; Log Homes of Cloudcroft, authorized representative of Lodge Logs. 505-336-2676.

Chama: July 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28; August 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25, 31; September 3-5, 10-12, 17-19, 24-26; 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; D Bar B Log Homes, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 877-709-4433.

Cloudcroft: Call for appointment; Log Homes of Cloudcroft, authorized representative of Lodge Logs. 800-896-9936.

LOG RAISINGS

Chama: July 7-9; August 12-14; 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; D Bar B Log Homes, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 877-709-4433.

NEW YORK

OPEN HOUSES

Asheville: Call for appointment; Northern Log Homes. 716-789-9808.

Ballston Spa: Saturday, 12-5 p.m.; Northern Log Homes, Inc. 518-882-9364.

Boiceville: July 17; call for appointment; The Original Lincoln Logs, Ltd. 845-657-6445.

Brewerton: July 17; August 14, September 11; 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; The Wilderness Co. 315-676-5780.

Canandaigua: September 11, 25; Call for appointment; Wyffels Log and Timberframe Homes, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 585-374-5647.

Elmira: July 3; August 7; September 4; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 607-739-4570.

Feura Bush: July 10; August 27; September 11, 25; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 518-768-8019.

Frewsburg: July 31; August 28; September 25; Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc. 716-569-3906.

Gansevoort: July 10-11; September 4-5; 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; The Wilderness Co. 518-792-LOGS.

Gardiner: July 17-18; August 21-22; September 18-19; 1-4 p.m.; The Wilderness Co. 845-256-0225.

Hancock: July 10-11; August 7-8; September 11-12; Beaver Mountain Log & Cedar Homes. 800-233-2770.

Hancock: July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; August 7, 14, 21, 28; September 4, 11, 18, 25; Lok-N-Logs. 800-558-4407.

Hogansburg: Call for appointment; General Log Homes, authorized representative of Northern Log Homes. 888-317-5647.

Hunter: Call for appointment; BK Cypress Log Homes. 518-263-4466.

LaFayette: July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; August 7, 14, 21, 28; September 4, 11, 18, 25; Lok-N-Logs. 800-232-8197.

Lake George: Call for times; The Original Lincoln Logs, Ltd. 800-833-2461.

Phelps: July 10-11; August 14-15; September 11-12; Schoen Custom Log & Country Homes, authorized representative of Real Log Homes. 800-736-4360.

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▽ Circle Reader Response #388

▽ Circle Reader Response #34

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▽ Circle Reader Response #168

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LOG HOME DESIGN IDEAS *presents ...*

12 Pages of floor plans

floor plan tips

Some ads show a package price, but not all packages are created equal. Prices could reflect the price of the home as a log shell on your property or it could be the logs delivered to your property on skids. Call the manufacturer and be sure you understand what is included.

If you find a home that intrigues you, call the manufacturer or fill out the reader response card found between pages 112 and 113 of this issue. Most companies have a reader response number located at the bottom of each ad. On the response card, circle the numbers of all the companies from which you would like information and return the card to us, postage paid.

Log home manufacturers have a wealth of materials to help you visualize the plan you have seen in this magazine. They have videos and plan books that go into great detail about many of their homes. Again, contact the company and ask what kind of materials they have available.

WOLF RIVER

First Floor: 1,536 sq. ft. Second Floor: 760 sq. ft.

Total Area: 2,296 sq. ft.

At Expedition Log Homes, our experienced team knows what distinguishes a memorable log home ... like hand-picked, kiln-dried pine or cedar, cut only from the heart of the log and skillfully crafted by hand with a drawknife. The Wolf River lends a traditional family floor plan with all of the best features of a log home, like an open great room, dining and kitchen center with cathedral ceilings. The second floor features a spacious loft overlooking the family activity and private study. The home is complete with a front porch for relaxing and back deck for entertaining.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

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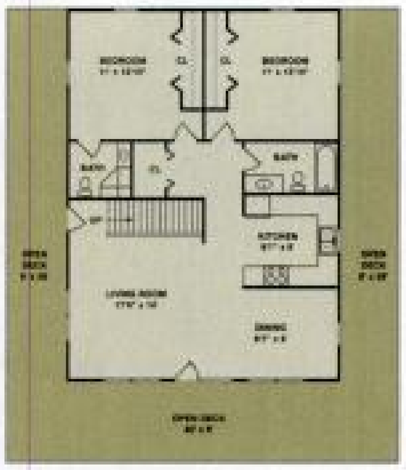
Circle Reader Response #390

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

ASPEN

First Floor: 1,064 sq. ft. Second Floor: 397 sq. ft.
Storage: 221 sq. ft. Total: 1,461 sq. ft.
Price: Starting at $62,220

This three-bedroom home offers rustic appeal for vacation or year-round living. The front deck adds country charm and invites outdoor relaxation.



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

LOOKOUT

First Floor: 1,876 sq. ft. Second Floor: 818 sq. ft.
Storage: 288 sq. ft. Total: 2,694 sq. ft.
Price: Starting at $124,358

Choose a beautiful site for this magnificent home because you will want to take advantage of the views provided by this impressive plan. This luxury home draws on a simple country heritage for its inspiration, but its inner workings should serve the most modern and active of families. On the main level, the wood-burning fireplaces in the great room and master bedroom add to the home's nostalgic charm while dormers give the upstairs bedrooms cozy spots for youngsters to curl up with a book.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

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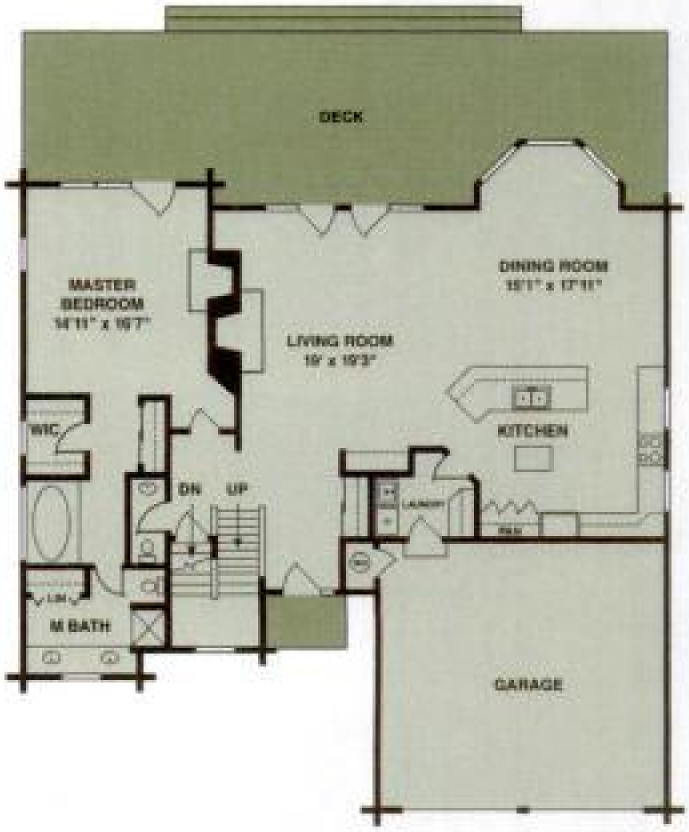
Circle Reader Response #186

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

TETON

First Floor: 1,814 sq. ft. Second Floor: 773 sq. ft.
Total Area: 2,587 sq. ft.

The spacious Teton offers panoramic views. An open living, dining and kitchen area is accented with log rafters and purlins in the cathedral ceiling. A full-height stone fireplace opens into the great room and master bedroom. A turret in the dining area adds a unique dimension to the home. Upstairs are two additional bedrooms, a bath and a view that can be enjoyed from the loft. Precision Craft specializes in custom design and can modify this or any plan.



FIRST FLOOR

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Circle Reader Response #40

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

A dramatic entry will lead you into this magnificent floor plan. The McKinley offers open great room and dining areas surrounded by windows and entries that lead to separate decks. The secluded master bedroom has an impressive dressing room and private master bath. An open staircase leads to a floating loft bridge with three bedrooms, two baths and a sitting area. Precision Craft specializes in custom design and can modify this or any plan.

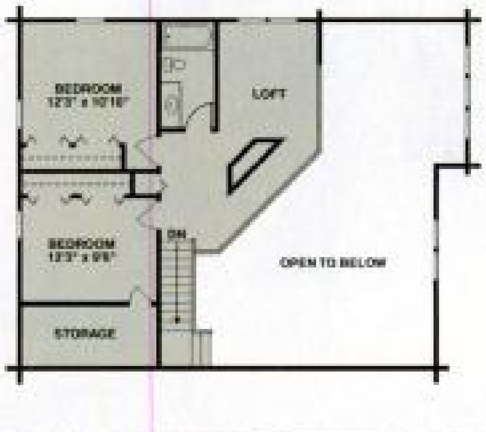
SECOND FLOOR

MCKINLEY

First Floor: 2,104 sq. ft. Second Floor: 1,052 sq. ft.
Total Area: 3,156 sq. ft.

The Ponderosa features open living, dining and kitchen areas, providing a spacious area for entertaining. The main floor also holds the large, private master suite. Upstairs, the open loft is perfect for a sitting area. Two more bedrooms and a bath are also on this level. Precision Craft specializes in custom design and can modify this or any plan.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

PONDEROSA

First Floor: 1,303 sq. ft. Second Floor: 619 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,922 sq. ft.

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Circle Reader Response #40

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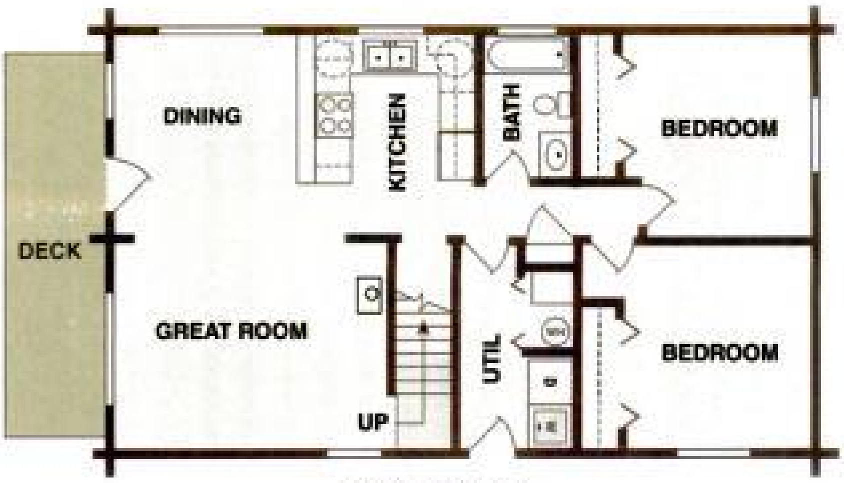
MEADOW CREEK

First Floor: 947 sq. ft. Second Floor: 400 sq. ft.

Total Area: 1,347 sq. ft.

Meadow Creek from Lodge Logs offers that large, open area feeling with three bedrooms, two baths and an open loft. Its dual purpose — either as a larger recreational cabin or as an ideal starter home — makes the Meadow Creek a great value.



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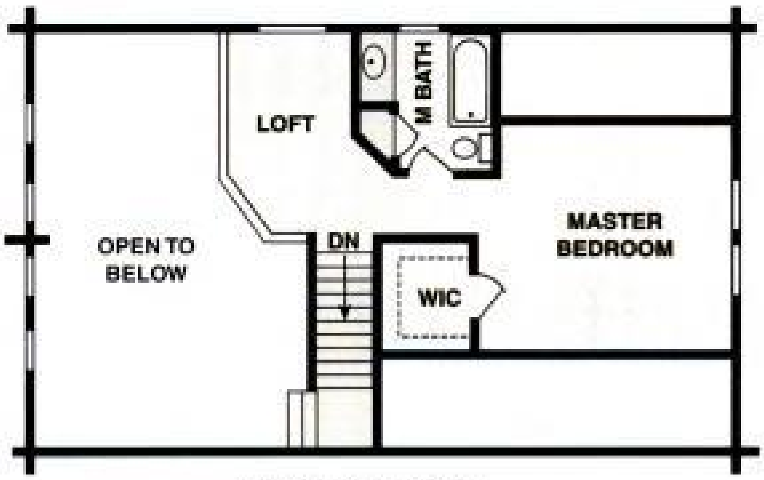

SECOND FLOOR

COLORADO

First Floor: 1,663 sq. ft. Second Floor: 887 sq. ft.

Total Area: 2,550 sq. ft.

The Colorado plan features a main floor master suite and three second floor bedrooms. A prow front with a large expanse of glass creates a wonderful picture frame for your view. The 180-degree view in the formal dining room completes the home. This plan is ideal for that panoramic lot in the mountains.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

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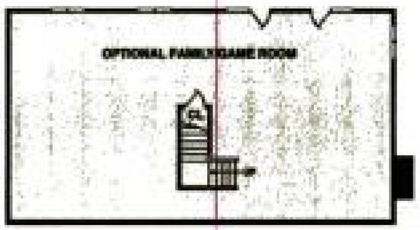
Circle Reader Response #219

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

Decks and a screened porch surround this home for the ultimate in outdoor relaxing or entertaining. The open great room, dining room and kitchen create an airy feel to match the atmosphere of the large master bedroom and bath. Upstairs, two bedrooms, a bathroom and loft finish this home with everything you need.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR



LOWER LEVEL

LAWRENCE SPRINGS

Total Area: 1,984 sq. ft.

Call for package prices.

Imagine warm summer evenings on the deck that spans the length of this home or relaxing in front of the fireplace on a fall evening in the large great room or master suite, both with cathedral ceilings. Add the loft with an excellent view to the outdoors through the circle-top windows. The breakfast room has a door to the deck and the den off the master suite offers the ultimate in privacy. Two bedrooms and a full bath on the second floor round out this spectacular home.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

GOLDEN VALLEY

Total Area: 3,941 sq. ft.

Call for package prices.

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Circle Reader Response #85

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

MLH 028-A

First Floor: 1,100 sq. ft. Second Floor: 650 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,750 sq. ft.
New Plans Book: $15 Video: $20

Frontier spirit and rustic charm in a vacation home or permanent residence. Designed with efficiency in mind, this 28'x40' plan has 1,100 square feet on the main floor and a three-quarter loft. A covered front porch adds character and style.

Montana Log Homes specializes in unique, custom, handcrafted log structures using logs from the prime timber ranges of northern Montana. Montana Log Homes in-house design and drafting services will create a design that reflects your personality, lifestyle, ideas and dreams. Present your ideas to the qualified, experienced, knowledgeable staff at Montana Log Homes to discuss plans for your very own handcrafted Montana log home.

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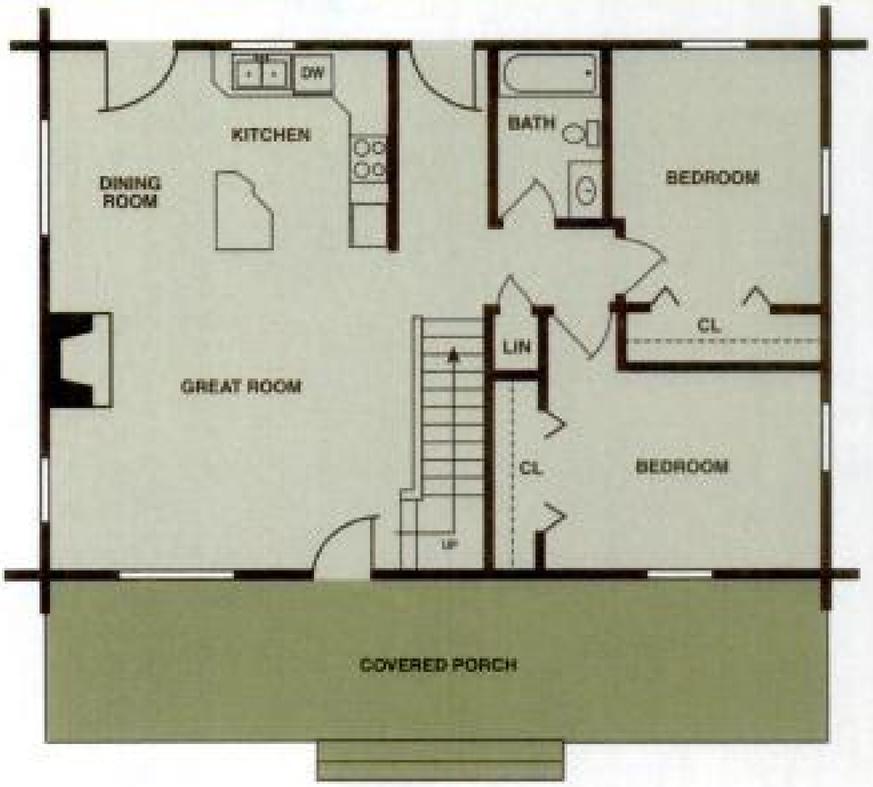

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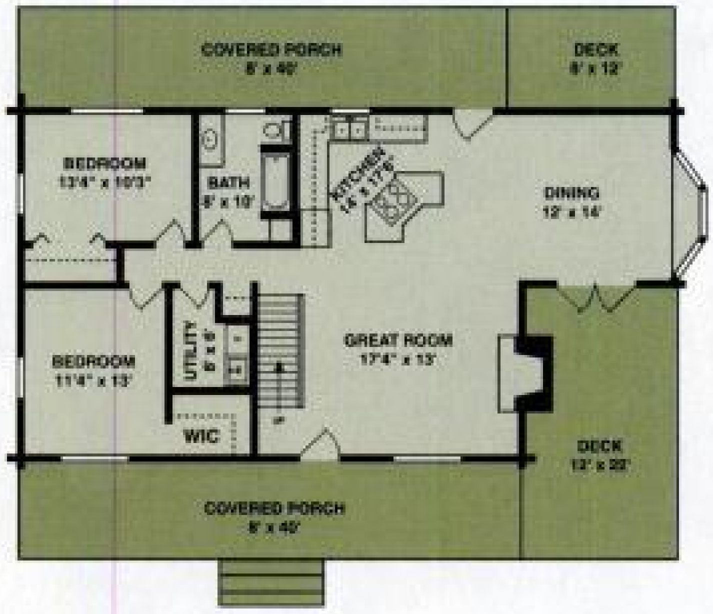
Circle Reader Response #313

SECOND FLOOR

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

This home offers a living area with a fireplace and a dining room tucked off the kitchen. Upstairs is an open loft with a secluded master bedroom and private balcony.



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

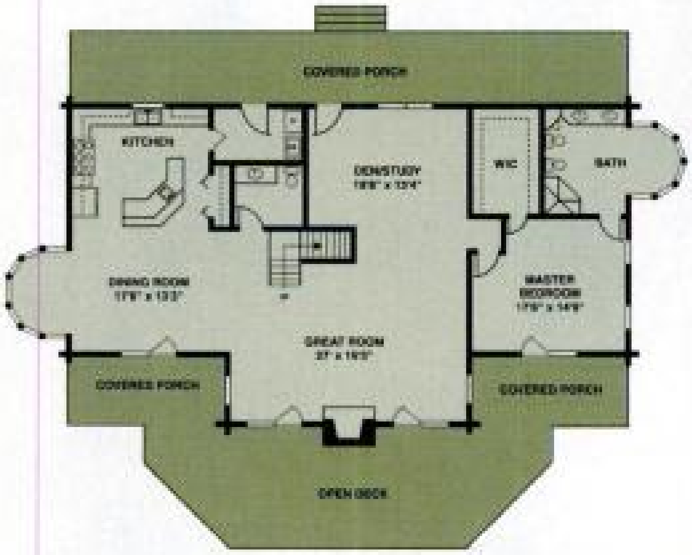
THE MANATEE

First Floor: 1,264 sq. ft.
Second Floor: 819 sq. ft.
Covered Porch: 640 sq. ft.
Total Decks: 360 sq. ft.

Total Area: 2,083 sq. ft.

This home provides many views from anywhere in the home. Large bow windows increase the light in both the dining room and the master bath, while both upstairs bedrooms have 8-foot dormers for maximum exposure.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

THE SHENANDOAH

First Floor: 2,044 sq. ft.
Second Floor: 1,048 sq. ft.
Covered Porch: 800 sq. ft.
Total Decks: 502 sq. ft.

Total Area: 3,092 sq. ft.

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Circle Reader Response #54

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BIG CREEK

Total Area: 7,300 sq. ft.

This distinctive log home combines American tradition with contemporary design. The main floor includes a great room, spacious kitchen and spiral staircase. An 800 square foot master suite features a bath and a nearby hot tub room. Laundry facilities are between the kitchen and three-car garage. The lower level includes guest quarters with three bedrooms and three bathrooms, as well as a large entertainment room.

SECOND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR

LOWER LEVEL

Neville Log Homes

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The Homestead is one of many nice designs in Coventry's Plan Book. It features main floor living, office/workshop space, and a two-car garage. All this at a very affordable price. Our complete package includes sub-floor, pre-cut kiln-dried log walls, Andersen windows, Therma-Tru doors, loft system, complete roof system, interior frame and T&G pine to finish, solid wood interior doors, locksets and much more. Call to ask about our shipping special.

FIRST FLOOR

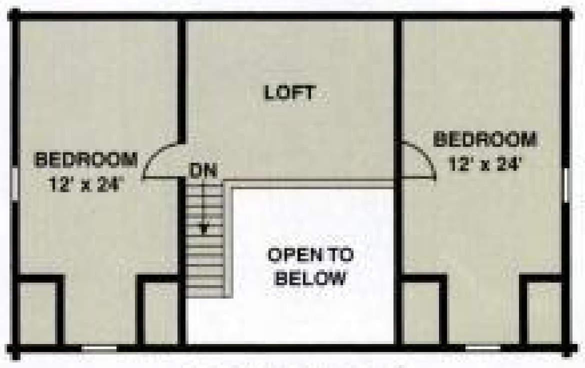
SECOND FLOOR

HOMESTEAD

Total Area without garage: 1,584 sq. ft.
Log Wall Package: $29,190 Shell Package: $41,895
Complete Package: $55,965

The Montana is just like its namesake: large and sprawling. This design has some remarkable character with large rooms, gable dormers and an open loft. Our complete package includes sub-floor, pre-cut kiln-dried log walls, Andersen windows, Therma-Tru doors, loft system, complete roof system, interior frame and T&G pine to finish, solid wood interior doors, locksets and much more. Call to ask about our shipping special.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

MONTANA

Total Area: 1,776 sq. ft.
Log Wall Package: $23,100 Shell Package: $33,915
Complete Package: $48,400

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FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

FINN

First Floor: 816 sq. ft. Second Floor: 475 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,291 sq. ft.

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Circle Reader Response #238

Light and airy! The cathedral ceiling throughout is structurally accented with heavy timber rafters and ridge beams. Two cozy bedrooms, each with a convenient bath, make this a great plan for a retreat or a first home. The kitchen and great room are open and efficient. After dinner, ease out on the deck and enjoy the sunset.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

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ADVERTISER INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE	RR#
Anthony Log Homes	78	232
Appalachian Log Care	97	276
Battle Creek Log Homes, Inc.	5, 101	186
Beaver Mountain Log & Cedar Homes	12	412
BK Cypress Log Homes	13	309
Black Forest Decor	87	482
Blairstown Distributors	78	49
Bosworth Tools	99	388
Canadian Antler Designs	89	374
Cast Horn Designs	83	393
Central Boiler	33	
Colonialworks	87	496
Colorado Dallas	89	
Cornerstone Log and Timber Homes	80	452
Coventry Log Homes	109	129
Daniel Joseph Historic Lighting	87	
Deltec Homes	32	120
Dumonds Custom Furniture, Inc.	89	427
Eagle's Nest Homes, Inc.	53	67
Expedition Log Homes	100	390
Fred Biggs Electric Supply	9	498
Gastineau Log Homes	17	99
Gateway Mountain	53	370
Heartbilt Homes, Inc.	47	136
Hearthstone, Inc.	80	
Heritage Home Care	97	52
Heritage Log Homes	IFC	190
Hiawatha Log Homes	43	97
Honest Abe Log Homes	35	201
International Log Builders' Association	29	231
Iron Shop, The	23	
J.R. Coppersmythe	89	
K&I Exclusive Pine Flooring	80	256
Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, Inc.	IBC	6
Laser Lodge	91	455
Lincoln Logs Ltd., The Original	1	326
Lodge Logs, Inc.	104	219
Log Home Agency, The	35	384
Log Home Living Bookstore	91	
Log Home Living Shows & Seminars	34, 42	
Log Home Outlet	93	371
Log Homes of America, Inc.	110	238
Log Wizard	80	200
Menco Corporation	99	82
Midwest Wholesale Log Supply	95	109
Montana Log Homes	106	313
Mountain Ranch Lighting	87	288
Mylen Stairs	97	115
Neville Log Homes	27, 108	24
Norse Log Homes	79	321
Northern Lights	85	
Old California Lantern Co.	85	355
Old Style Log Works, Inc.	26	241
Original Log Cabin Homes, The	47	30
Original Log Homes Ltd.	49	81
Outaouais Log Homes	110	
Pan Abode Cedar Homes	26	224
Panel Concepts	12	392
Paradise Mountain Log Homes, Inc.	32	389
Perma-Chink Systems, Inc.	16	
Precision Craft Log Structures	102	40
Radiantec	29	
Roaring Fork Custom Billiards & Furniture	91	278
Rocky Mountain Log Furniture, Inc.	85	226
Rocky Top Log Furniture & Railing	83	137
Sashco Sealants	49	444
Satterwhite Log Homes	19	9
Schroeder Log Home Supply, Inc.	99	34
Scottsdale Art Factory	11	
Sierra Log Homes	33	39
Skyline Woods	22	
Specialty Woodworks Co.	53	
StoneMill Log Homes	43	43
Suwannee River Log Homes	107	54
Tennessee Log Homes	16	86
TJ's Wood Products	28	119
Tomahawk Log & Country Homes	2	7
Town & Country Cedar Homes	28	
True North Log Homes, Inc.	7	104
Twin Creeks Log Home Supply, Inc.	99	168
Wilderness Log Homes	105, OBC	85
Wood-Mizer	79	84
Woodguard Finishes	79	51

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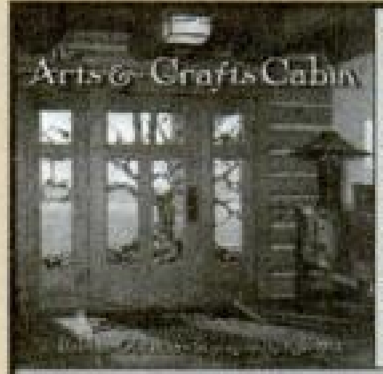

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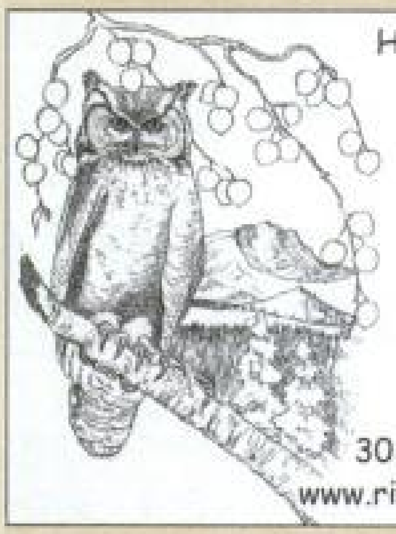

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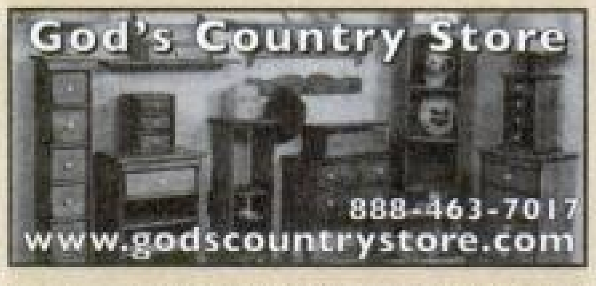

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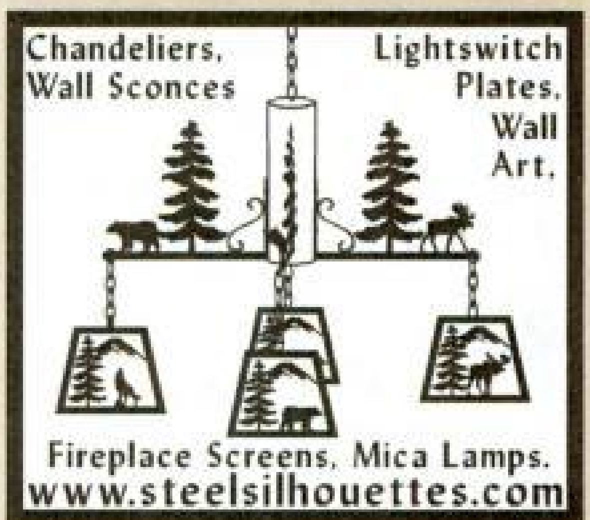

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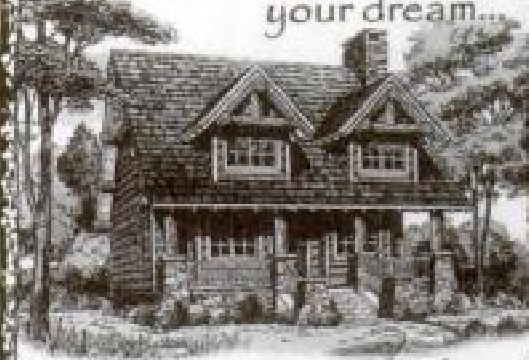

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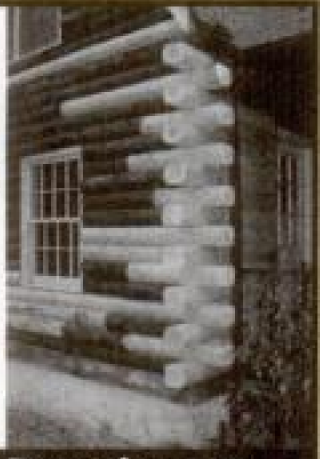

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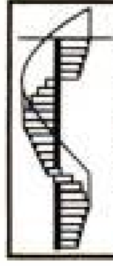

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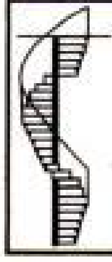

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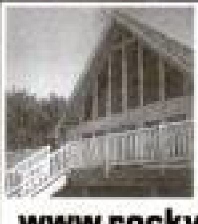

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(2) Mail entries must be postmarked between December 11, 2003, and October 8, 2004; electronic entries must be submitted between 9 a.m. CST on December 11, 2003, and 11:59 p.m. CST on October 8, 2004.

(3) One entry per person.

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(5) Grand Prize-Lonesome Pine II Dry-In Log Home Package from Appalachian Log Homes: On or about October 15, 2004, one entry will be drawn from all correct entries received. The winner will be notified by mail or telephone and announced in either the January 2005 or February 2005 issue of Log Home Design Ideas and on the LHDI website. Winner must agree to accept delivery before December 31, 2005, or forfeit prize. Entry of the Lonesome Pine II Dry-In Log Home Package winner will not be returned to the entry pool to become eligible for the 1st place prize.

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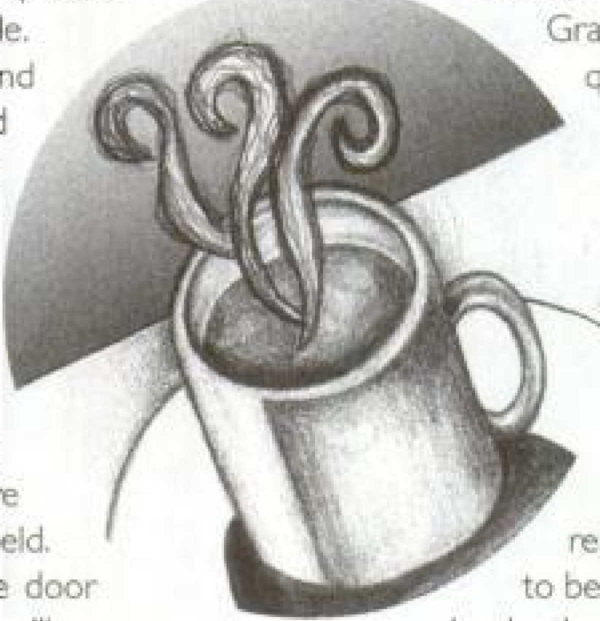
Addiction Of Choice

As shocking as it might sound, I can trace my most dominant addiction to my childhood. And it was all my grandmother's and my Aunt Lucy's doing.

As I think about it now, I don't think it was ever the flavor of coffee that snared me, but rather the rituals that surrounded the brewing and drinking of this popular beverage. Having coffee was serious business on both sides of my family, my father's Mississippi people and my mother's northern Wisconsin people.



My Aunt Lucy lived with her husband George and their children, Horace and Garvis, on the family's home place called Goat Knob, just a stone's throw from Popplerville, Mississippi. At least once a summer, my dad would haul all of us over to visit his sister (Lucy) and her family. Truth be told, it was like entering another world for us, a place where the chickens ranged everywhere and watermelons were grown by the field. An outhouse with a half-moon on the door stood out back and a majestic, sweet-smelling magnolia spread its branches in welcome near the front porch.

I don't remember what the exact sleeping arrangements were but I know we must have been crowded into that humble four-room dwelling set up on stilts. I do, however, vividly remember waking up in the morning to the rich irresistible aroma of roasting coffee beans. Aunt Lucy roasted fresh beans (where she got them is a mystery to me) daily in an imposing wood burning stove, then ground the still warm beans in an ancient grinder that hung on the wall of the open back porch. Sometimes, if I stumbled into the kitchen in time, she would give me the honor of "grindin' them beans".

We were all given small cups of the brew, laced substantially with fresh cream. The taste was tolerable but a little disappointing. Nothing could possibly live up to the tantalizing smell. Still, it was an intoxicating experience that has stayed with me to this day.

I also drank my share of coffee at my grandmother's table when we headed north most summers on the City of New Orleans train to visit the Yankee relatives in Wisconsin. Grandmother bought her coffee in bags, as I recall, and prepared the drink in a huge blue enameled coffee pot that had a permanent place near the back of the wood stove in her large farm kitchen. The thing that intrigued me about her coffee was that she would measure the grounds out into a bowl, then mix in an egg. That produced a downright disgusting concoction that she dumped into the boiling water in the pot. Through some kind of Swedish magic, the grounds settled to the bottom, leaving a beautifully clear and tasty pot of coffee.

Once in the morning and once in the afternoon, my uncles would come in for a little coffee break. Grandmother would see them coming and quickly set out the teacups and saucers, along with a plate of some sweet treat or slices of homemade bread and butter. The men were always in a hurry, it seemed, pouring the hot beverage into their saucers so it would cool faster. They then sipped it off the saucer, sweetening it with a sugar cube they held between their teeth. For a few short minutes, we would chat, hearing reports of the work accomplished and yet to be done, exchanging a couple of stories and laughs, then almost as quickly as they came, they disappeared back into the serious business of summer farm work.

My mother and father shared a coffee ritual that puzzled me. Without fail, my mother would ask my father every single afternoon around 2 o'clock: "Daddy, would you like a little cup of coffee?"

And in reply, without fail, Dad would pause as if he were actually making up his mind, then say, "Well, Mama, if you want some." Of course, by the time he answered, she already had the percolator plugged in and loaded with Hills Brothers. So why, I often wondered, even ask?

But I get it now. Bob and I take a break in the morning and afternoon these days, and when I hear him yank open the back screen door, I automatically ask, "Would you like a little cup of coffee?" And he always answers, "Sure, honey, if you do."

I love coffee. I'm addicted to coffee. Not to the flavor, but to the warmth of sharing it with someone I love.

Lee Bock

Lee Bock, rural Wisconsin essayist, shares her observations and reflections in each issue of Log Home Design Ideas. *You can write to her at Home Fires, c/o* Log Home Design Ideas, *1620 S. Lawe St., Suite #2, Appleton, WI 54915.*

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